Documents on Israeli-Soviet Relations 1941-1953

Part I: May 1941-1949

Eytan Bentsur

ROUTLEDGE

DOCUMENTS ON ISRAELI–SOVIET RELATIONS, 1941–1953

Part I: 1941–May 1949

ISRAEL MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

ISRAEL STATE ARCHIVES

THE CUMMINGS CENTER
FOR RUSSIAN STUDIES
TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

RUSSIAN FEDERAL ARCHIVES

INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES
RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

EDITORIAL BOARD

Eytan Bentsur (Chairman)
Evyatar Friesel
Gabriel Gorodetsky

Academic Editors
Yaacov Ro'i
Yehoshua Freundlich
Dov Yaroshevski

Boris L. Kolokolov (Chairman)
Alexander V. Saltanov
Pavel V. Stegny
Mikhail L. Bogdanov
Sergei V. Mironenko
Vitalii V. Naumkin

Translations from Hebrew: Ralph Mandel, Joseph Elron

Translations from Russian: Richard Kindersley

DOCUMENTS ON ISRAELI–SOVIET RELATIONS 1941–1953

Part I: 1941–May 1949

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2000 by Frank Cass Publishers

Published 2019 by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Copyright © 2000 Cummings Center

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Notice:
Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Documents on Israeli–Soviet relations, 1941–1953
Part 1: 1941–May 1949. Part 2: May 1949–1953. –
(The Cummings Center series)
1. Soviet Union–Foreign relations–Israel–Sources
2. Israel–Foreign relations–Soviet Union–Sources
I. Israel. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
II. Cummings Center for Russian and East European Studies
327.4'7'05694

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress

Typeset by Marty Bokel, Tel Aviv, Israel

ISSN 1365-3733
ISBN 13: 978-0-7146-4843-9 (hbk) (part 1)

CONTENTS

PART I

List of Illustrations VII

Foreword by the Foreign Minister of the State of Israel VIII

Foreword by the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation IX

Preface XI

Glossary and Abbreviations XV

List of Documents, Parts I and II XXI

Documents 1–242 1

PART II

Documents 243–498 469

Biographical Notes 945

Bibliography 967

Index 973

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

ILLUSTRATIONS

PART I
between pages 36 and 37

1. Sergei Mikhailov greeting the V League Founding Convention, 25 August 1942
2. Ambulances donated to the Red Army by the V League before being transported to Tehran, 1943
3. Minister-designate of the USSR to Israel, Pavel Ershov, prior to the presentation of his credentials, with Dr. Michael Simon, head of protocol at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 17 August 1948
4. Ershov with members of the Soviet legation
5. Ershov, after the presentation of his credentials, 17 August 1948
6. Departure of the Israeli legation staff to Moscow, 29 August 1948
7. Golda Meyerson, Valerian Zorin and Acting Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet I. Vlasov, after the presentation of Meyerson's credentials, 10 September 1948
8. Premises used by the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv, 1948–53
9. Israeli delegation to the Third Session of the UN General Assembly in Paris, October 1948
10. Pavel Ershov attends a prayer session in the Church of the Holy Trinity, Jerusalem, autumn 1948

PART II
between pages 494 and 495

11. Andrei Vyshinskii and Moshe Sharett at the Fourth Session of the UN General Assembly in Paris, 1949
12. Semen Tsarapkin, Abba Eban and Arthur Lourie at a meeting of the UN Security Council, New York, early 1950s
13. Meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, 11 December 1951
14. Russian Church of the Holy Trinity, Russian Compound, Jerusalem, early 1950s
15. Visit of Soviet diplomats to Gornenskii Monastery, Jerusalem, *circa* 1949
16. Conference of Israel diplomatic representatives abroad, Tel Aviv, 17 July 1951
17. Ershov delivering a speech at a tree-planting ceremony at the Soviet Army forest near Kibbutz Maale Hahamisha, 22 June 1950
18. Pavel Ershov at the unveiling of a monument in the Soviet Army forest
19. Pavel Ershov with President Yitzhak Ben-Zvi at a reception for the diplomatic corps, 8 January 1953
20. Soviet and Israeli diplomats at a reception in New York, early 1950s

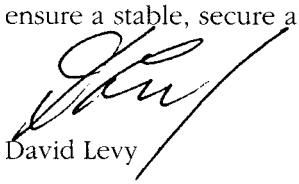
FOREWORD BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

The official publication of documents on Israeli–Soviet relations is indeed an extraordinary event. Governments rarely embark on joint publications, usually preferring to present their own case through unilateral selections of documents. The decision taken by both our governments to prepare such a collection, shortly after the resumption of relations in 1991, was an important confidence-building measure, aimed at overcoming almost 25 years of mutual suspicion and antagonism. This publication offers an insight into Israeli–Soviet relations at their formative stage. It dispels much of the mystery surrounding the steadfast Soviet support of the creation of the State of Israel in 1947-48, as well as the ensuing drift away from this position.

The documents, as well as providing fascinating reading, supply clear historical lessons for future reference. Throughout most of the period under investigation, the two countries were at loggerheads. This had little to do with the genuine interests of either Israel or the Soviet Union. The conflicts often arose in the context of the Cold War, when the Middle East turned into a battlefield of the major powers. Thus, from the outset, Israel exercised limited control over its relations with the Soviet Union. The interest displayed by the Soviet Union in Israel and the Arab countries was primarily a reflection of its relations with the United States.

The end of the Cold War, however, removed the obstacles that had hampered relations and kindled animosity. The resumption of relations coincided with the advance of the peace process, in which Russia now assumes an important positive role as co-sponsor together with the Americans. The Russian government is able to harness its traditionally strong standing with our Arab neighbours to help bring about reconciliation. Russian Jewry is no longer a bone of contention between the two countries. On the contrary, the almost one million new immigrants from Russia act as a bridge in fostering economic, scientific and cultural ties between our two countries.

The major themes in the Soviet–Israeli discourse, as they emerge from the collection, are as relevant to us today as they were then. From the Russian point of view, contending with the past has led to a growing awareness of Israel as a powerful, technologically advanced and economically developed entity in the Middle East, deserving of a secure and peaceful existence. At the same time, Israel has come to recognize that Russia, by virtue of its status as a major power straddling the European and Asian continents, has direct interests in our region. Those interests, we are certain, can be channelled to ensure a stable, secure and prosperous Middle East.



David Levy

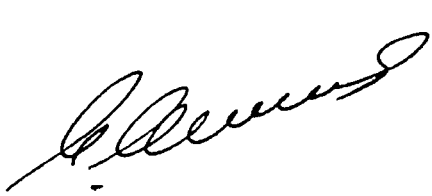
FOREWORD BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

It is well known that the future cannot be built without understanding the past. For this reason, the publication of the present Russian–Israeli collection of documents is of great significance. It constitutes a unique attempt jointly to examine the history of Russian–Israeli relations, which have followed a bumpy road, characterized by sharp turns, in the development of international and regional politics in the second half of our century. For almost 25 years, Russia and Israel were deprived of an opportunity for normal inter-state and human relations. This situation was a product of the Cold War, in which state interests were often subordinated to ideological clichés, and the uncompromising logic of global confrontation clouded perceptions of reality and even common sense.

Fortunately, those days have disappeared into oblivion. Russian–Israeli relations, fully renewed in 1991, are steadily gaining momentum. Owing to significantly greater openness and freedom of contacts, we have had the opportunity, within a short period of time, to get to know each other better and to embark on a path towards overcoming the legacy of the past. The fact that hundreds of thousands of native Russian-speakers have settled in Israel during the last decade also plays a significant role. It is they, who in many cases, have become the connecting link in relations between our countries, the living bridge that leads to deepening trust and constructive cooperation.

Diverse views of Russian and Israeli politicians and diplomats are reflected on the pages of this volume. This is natural, insofar as Russia and Israel are states with their own perspectives and traditions. The juxtaposition of these views endows the past with new meaning, and promotes mutually advantageous cooperation in the future.

I am convinced that the present collection of documents will make a major contribution to the steady development of renewed relations between the two countries, and that the materials extracted from the archives will be useful, not only for professional orientalists, but also for all those who have an interest in the modern history of the Middle East.



Igor Ivanov

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

PREFACE

The idea of the joint publication of this volume originated with the resumption of relations between Israel and the Russian Federation in 1991. The dramatic thaw which occurred after a breach of almost 25 years, was welcomed in both countries. A profound cultural affinity has always existed between the two nations. The Soviet Union's major role in the creation of the state as well as its contribution to the victory over Nazi Germany have been highly esteemed in Israel. Yet, two issues ruled out chances for a long-term working relationship: the circumstances of the Cold War found Israel and the USSR on opposite sides of the barricade and the plight of Soviet Jewry and Israel's desire for the emigration of those Jews who wished to leave were a constant bone of contention. Soviet support of the Arab cause further embittered relations, which, in time, became laden with emotion, mutual suspicion and prejudice.

Confidence-building measures were therefore a vital concomitant to the formal resumption of relations. At the initiative of Prof. Gabriel Gorodetsky, then director of the Cummings Center for Russian Studies at Tel Aviv University, and with the ardent backing of Mr. Aryeh Levin, the first Israeli ambassador to Moscow after 1967, attempts were made to interest various institutes of the Russian Academy of Sciences in producing a joint history of Israeli-Soviet relations. It soon became apparent, however, that the burden of the past and the dearth of documentary resources, made such an undertaking virtually impossible. The Russian Foreign Ministry was then approached with an alternative proposal for a joint official publication of documents covering the relations between the two states from their incipience in the early 1940s to 1967. The proposal met with an enthusiastic response, which reflected the desire of both countries to turn over a new leaf in their mutual relations. It was further recognized that beyond serving as an invaluable resource for historians, a thorough study of the past could also provide practitioners with information vital to future policy making.

A framework for the project was then established. Prof. Evyatar Friesel, head of the Israel State Archives, where the papers of the Israeli Foreign Ministry are deposited, joined forces with the Cummings Center for Russian Studies, under the aegis of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, in preparing the Israeli contribution. Negotiations with Dr. Igor Lebedev, director of the Department of History and Records at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation followed, and the contours of the project were shaped. The formal protocol was signed on 27 April 1993 by Mr. Yosef Govrin, then deputy director of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, and by Mr. Boris Kolokolov, Russian deputy minster of foreign affairs. It stipulated that two versions – one Russian and one English – would appear simultaneously, edited respectively by the Russian and Israeli teams.

Prof. Yaacov Ro'i, of the Cummings Center, and Dr. Yehoshua Freundlich, editor of *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, took charge of the editorial

work on the Israeli side. They were assisted by Dr. Dov Yaroshevski and Ambassador Aba Gefen. Our colleagues in Moscow were Iurii Strizhov, Petr Pronitchev, and Sergei Barsukov of the Department of History and Records. The work of the joint team was marked by openness, genuine intellectual curiosity and commitment.

In the initial stage, each side researched its own archives and produced a comprehensive annotated list of documents. During meetings between the working teams in Jerusalem and Moscow in 1995, the documents to be included in the common narrative were selected. They were then translated for the Israeli version from Hebrew and Russian into English, and for the Russian version from Hebrew and English into Russian.

The project went into high gear after the appointment of Mr. Petr Stegny as director of the Department of History and Records. The late Mr. Viktor Posuvaliuk, head of the Middle East and North African Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry, and the Russian ambassador to Israel, Mr. Mikhail Bogdanov, played a key role in mediating between the two sides. They were tireless in their efforts to iron out difficulties which arose in the course of the work. Mr. Eytan Bentsur, the director general of the Israel Foreign Ministry, offered full support at several critical junctures in the project. Unstinting assistance came also from the successive deputy directors of the Israel Foreign Ministry in charge of Russia, the late Miron Gordon, Yoel Sher, Natan Meron and most recently Shimon Stein. The staff of the Israeli Embassy in Moscow saw meticulously to our needs during numerous visits to Moscow.

Our deepest gratitude is due to Deena Leventer, the editor of the Cummings Center Series, who did a tremendous job in piecing together the maze of documents, checking the translations, and coordinating the work between the teams. Her dedication went far beyond the call of duty. Likewise, we extend our thanks to Beryl Belsky who assisted in the editorial work.

* * *

The documents published in this volume derive in the main from the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and the Israel State Archives, and, for the the period prior to the establishment of the State of Israel (1941–May 1948), from the Jewish Agency files kept in the Central Zionist Archives. Some additional documentation has come, on the Russian side, from the State Archives of the Russian Federation and the Presidential Archive, and in Israel, from the Ben-Gurion and Weizmann Archives.

The approximately 500 documents produced in this volume are divided almost evenly between the two parties. The corpus of documents is identical in the Russian and Israeli versions of the publication. The scientific apparatus is, however, often different, each side providing its own footnotes and editorial comment to cater to its own readership.

In principle, the original texts have been produced in their entirety. Omissions and deletions have been made only in exceptional cases. Long

documents, such as the multi-page reports of the USSR legation in Israel, or the minutes of Israeli government sessions, have been produced in part and described in the headings as excerpts.

Hebrew, Russian, and the two French documents, have been translated for the Israeli version into English. English language documents have been produced in their original form. No attempt has been made to edit or correct style. Minor typing and grammatical mistakes have been corrected without comment. In cases where the original was patently incorrect or garbled, a conjectural reading has been suggested in brackets or in the notes. The awkward style of some of the Israeli documents can be attributed to the fact that the majority of the authors were not writing in their mother tongues, which was, in many cases, Russian.

Transliteration from Russian was carried out according to a version of the system used by the Library of Congress, with minor simplifications for ease of reading. Hebrew transliteration follows a very simplified phonetic system. The names of a few famous people have been left in their familiar forms.

The Israeli and Soviet documents are interspersed and arranged chronologically. Documents composed or sent over a number of days are placed according to the earliest date. Reports of meetings and discussions appear according to the date of the event, irrespective of the date of the document's composition. The heading includes, apart from the name of the sender and the recipient, the destination of the document and the date and place of composition or occurrence of the event. The documents are categorized according to three main diplomatic formats: copy (including reports, letters, memoranda and briefs), telegram (tel.) (mostly coded) and diary (including official records of conversations traditionally kept by Soviet officials).

Editorial notes are numbered and appear as footnotes at the bottom of the page. They provide information on important events or developments that are not presented in the documents and are intended to elucidate the text, to interpret its significance and provide cross-references to other pertinent documents and notes in the volume. Notes that appear in the original document are marked with an asterisk.

Biographical information is provided in the footnotes when it is crucial to an understanding of the text. Otherwise, all information regarding persons mentioned in the documents can be found in the Biographical Notes. The information provided in the list is, for the most part, restricted to the period covered in this publication. More extensive biographies have been provided for key players in the sphere of Soviet–Israeli relations.

The Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations defines foreign language terms which have been retained, important bodies and institutions, and abbreviations and acronyms which reoccur in the text.

The Israeli Editorial Board

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

aliya – immigration to Israel.

All-Slav Committee – one of several anti-fascist committees set up by Soviet Information Bureau, 1941, to coordinate propaganda activities among Slavic peoples during World War II.

AP RF – Arkhiv Prezidenta Rossisskoi Federatsii (Presidential Archive of the Russian Federation).

Assefat Hanivharim – assembly of the Jewish community in mandatory Palestine.

AUCP(b) – All Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), name of Russian Communist Party from 1936 until 1952, when it was changed to CPSU.

AVP RF – Arkhiv vneshnei politiki Rossisskoi Federatsii (Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation).

BG Archives – Ben-Gurion Archives.

Bund – General Labour Union of Lithuania, Poland and Russia, established 1897. In 1898 joined the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party as an autonomous organization. In 1921 the Bund dissolved itself following its incorporation into the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks).

CC – AUCP(b)/CPSU Central Committee.

Cominform – Communist Information Bureau, created 1947 to coordinate activities of ruling communist parties; abolished 1956.

Comintern – Communist International, world organization of communist parties; existed 1919–43.

Constituent Assembly – precursor of Israeli Knesset.

Council of People's Commissars – known by Russian acronym Sovnarkom; name given Soviet government until 1946, when it became the Council of Ministers.

CPSU Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

CZA – Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.

d. – *delo* (file).

doc. – document.

DP – displaced person (in Central Europe after World War II).

evsektsiia – Jewish Section of RCP(b) Central Committee, founded 1918; operated alongside additional national sections – German, Polish, Yugoslav, Lithuanian, Estonian, Czech and Hungarian; abolished 1930.

f. – *fond* (record group).

FRUS – *Foreign Relations of the United States.*

GA OR – *General Assembly Official Records*, United Nations.

GARF – Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation).

General Zionists – Tsionim Klaliim, a middle class party of the centre and right, closely associated with capitalist industry and farming.

haftara – a relevant reading from the Books of Prophets which follows reading of Tora portion in the synagogue on Sabbath and festivals.

Hagana – Jewish underground defence organization in mandatory Palestine.

halakha – Jewish law and jurisprudence.

Hashomer Hatsair – 'The Young Watchman', socialist youth organization founded 1913 in Galicia; in Palestine in the 1920s developed a pronounced Marxist-leftist line.

Histadrut – General Federation of Labour in Israel, established 1920 as the Federation of Jewish Labour.

Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society – founded 1882 in St. Petersburg, under chairmanship of Grand Duke Sergei, to promote pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to collect information on Christian holy sites.

Intourist – established 1929 to organize and control foreign tourism in the USSR; from end of 1950s also managed travel of Soviet tourists abroad.

Irgun Zvai Leumi (IZL, Etzel) – 'National Military Organization'; armed Jewish underground movement founded 1937 by Zionist Revisionists who seceded from Hagana.

ISA – Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

Israel–USSR Friendship Society – Haaguda Leyididut Yisrael–Brit Hamoatsot; established by ruling Mapai Party to counterbalance pro-Soviet activities of League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

JDC – American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

Jewish Agency – established 1922 to represent interests of *yishuv* to British government, to maintain contacts between Jews of Palestine/Israel and those of Diaspora and to encourage immigration.

Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee (JAFC) – established in USSR 1942 to mobilize material and public assistance for Soviet war effort among Jewish communities abroad. In 1948 JAFC activities were terminated, and the majority of its members were arrested and shot in 1952.

Jewish Autonomous Oblast' – province in Khabarovsk krai; created 1934; area – 36,000 square kilometres; capital – Birobidzhan.

Jewish National Fund (JNF) – founded 1901 to deal with acquisition, improvement and afforestation of land.

Keren Hayesod – 'Foundation Fund', established 1920 to finance Jewish settlement and immigration in Palestine.

Keren Kayemet – *see* Jewish National Fund.

Knesset – Israeli parliament.

l. (pl. **ll.**) – *list* (pl. *listy*), folio.

League for Friendly Relations with the USSR – known also as the League for Friendship with the USSR; a public committee to aid the Soviet Union, established in Palestine 1946 on the basis of the V League (founded 1942); affiliated with Histadrut.

Lehi – Lohamei Herut Yisrael (Israel Freedom Fighters), also known as Stern Group; Zionist militant underground organization founded in Palestine by Abraham Stern; broke away from Irgun Zvai Leumi in 1939 because latter had called off its campaign against British mandatory authorities for duration of WWII.

Maki – acronym, Miflaga Komunistit Yisraelit (Israeli Communist Party).

Mapai – acronym, Mifleget Poale Eretz Yisrael (Israeli Workers' Party), established 1930 through merger of Ahdut Haavoda and Hapoel Hatsair.

Mapam – acronym, Mifleget Poalim Meuchedet (United Workers' Party), a socialist–Zionist party established 1948, comprising Hashomer Hatsair and Ahdut Haavoda.

MK – Member of Knesset.

MVD – Ministerstvo vnutrennykh del (Ministry of Internal Affairs).

n. – (pl. **nn.**) – note.

Narkomindel – Narodnyi komissariat innostrannykh del (People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs).

NKVD – Narodnyi komissariat vnutrennikh del (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs).

oblast' – administrative territorial unit; sub-division of union republic.

op. – *opis'* (inventory).

Orthodox Palestine Society – emigré organization which administered former holdings of Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society under British Mandate.

Palmah – élite strike force of Hagana; disbanded October 1948 following Ben-Gurion's decision that no unit in army of the new state might retain a separate command.

p. – *papka* (folder).

Poale Zion – 'Workers of Zion', socialist political faction founded 1905–6 by Russian Jews; its Palestinian branch merged with smaller groups 1919 to form Ahdut Haavoda.

prisoners of Zion – Jews incarcerated for Zionist activities and refused right of emigration to Palestine and later to Israel.

PRO CO – Public Record Office, Colonial Office.

PRO FO – Public Record Office, Foreign Office.

Rosh Hashana – Jewish New Year.

Russian Palestine Society – initially established as academic body 1918; after creation of State of Israel, Soviet government declared it responsible for controlling assets of former Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society.

SC OR – *Security Council Official Records*, United Nations.

seder – ceremonial service celebrating Passover holiday, which marks exodus of Jews from bondage in Egypt.

Sovinformburo – Soviet Information Bureau, set up June 1941 under aegis of Commissariat for Foreign Affairs to coordinate propaganda activities during World War II; supervised anti-fascist committees.

Tass – Telegrafnoe Agentstvo Sovetskogo Soiuza (Telegraphic Agency of the Soviet Union), central information organ of USSR, established 1925; gathered domestic and foreign information and distributed it to media.

tel – telegram.

Tora – the Pentateuch.

UNSCOP – United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, set up by General Assembly 1947 to study the problem and make recommendations to General Assembly's 2nd Regular Session.

V League – *see* League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

Vaad Leumi – the *yishuv*'s Jewish National Council.

VOKS – *Vsesoiuznoe obshchestvo kul'turnykh sviazei s zagranitsei* (All–Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries); established 1925, served, in cooperation with Foreign Ministry, as vehicle for Soviet cultural propaganda.

WA – Weizmann Archive.

WFTU – World Federation of Trade Unions.

World Jewish Congress (WJC) – worldwide association of Jewish groups, communities and organizations established 1936; represents interests of Jews in UN, UNESCO and other international organizations.

World Zionist Congress – regularly convened body of representatives of Zionist movement from various countries; first World Zionist Congress was convened in Basel, 1897.

World Zionist Organization (WZO) – organization which directs Zionist movement in periods between world Jewish congresses.

yishuv – Jewish population of Palestine and its institutions prior to the establishment of the State of Israel.

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

PART I

1941

1. (E)*30 Jan. **Meeting of the Jewish Agency Executive**
Weizmann's conversation with Maiskii: suggestion to trade Palestinian oranges for Russian furs; the future of Palestine.

2. (R) 3 Feb. **Meeting: I.M. Maiskii – Ch. Weizmann**
Weizmann's suggestion to trade Palestinian oranges for Russian furs; proposal to settle Central European Jews in Palestine.

3. (E) 17 July **Meeting: E. Neumann and M.L. Perlzweig – K. Umanskii**
Request to assist and permit emigration from the USSR of Jews who held Polish citizenship.

4. (E) 2 Aug. **I.J. Linton to M. Shertok**
Meeting of Brodsky and Locker with Novikov in London; emigration of Polish and Russian Zionists from the USSR, legislation regarding Zionism in the USSR.

5. (R) 2 Sept. **I.M. Maiskii to the USSR People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs**
Positive response of British and American Jews to Soviet Jewish appeals for help in the struggle against the Nazis.

6. (E) 8 Sept. **Ch. Weizmann to I.M. Maiskii**
Response of the Jewish Agency to appeals by Soviet Jews to assist the USSR in its struggle against fascism.

7. (E) 9 Oct. **Meeting: D. Ben-Gurion – I.M. Maiskii**
Offer of the Jewish labour movement in Palestine to assist the Soviet Union; request to send Zionist delegation to the USSR.

8. (R) 31 Dec. **S.I. Kavtaradze to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Meeting of the Soviet ambassador in Turkey with E. Epstein: medical assistance from Palestine to the USSR; permission for elderly Zionists to join their relatives in Palestine.

1942

9. (R) 20 Jan. **F.T. Gusev to A.Ia. Vyshinskii.**
Soviet reply to the *yishuv*'s offer of medical supplies; Jewish Agency attempts to station representatives in the USSR.

10. (H) 25 Jan. **E. Epstein to M. Shertok**
Meeting with the Soviet ambassador in Turkey: Jewish emigration from USSR to Palestine; stationing Jewish Agency representatives in the USSR.

*Language of original: (E) English; (R) Russian; (H) Hebrew; (F) French

11. (E) 2 Mar. **Ch. Weizmann to I.M. Maiskii**
Dispatch of memorandum on the USSR and Zionism.

12. (R) 6 May **Meeting: M.M. Litvinov – Ch. Weizmann**
Visit of Weizmann and Goldmann to the Soviet embassy in Washington; postwar settlement of the Jewish question.

13. (H) 18 June **Magen Society to M. Shertok**
Release of Zionist prisoners in the USSR.

14. (R) 22 July **M.A. Kostylev to S.I. Kavtaradze**
Trade relations between Palestine and the USSR.

15. (E) 30 Aug. **Y. Klinov to M. Shertok**
Visit by Soviet delegation to Palestine.

16. (H) 31 Aug. **Excerpts from the Diary of Y. Ben-Zvi**
Meetings with the Soviet delegation to Palestine.

17. (R) 26 Oct. **VOKS Society to the League for Soviet Russia**
Offer of cooperation with the newly formed League for Soviet Russia.

18. (R) 19 Nov. **Communiqué of the Sovinformburo on the Extermination of the Jewish Population in Europe**
Details of the Nazi plan to annihilate European Jewry.

19. (R) 23 Dec. **A.Ia. Vyshinskii to V.M. Molotov**
Polish ambassador's meeting with Vyshinskii: disputed citizenship of Polish Jews in the USSR; emigration of a group of rabbis.

1943

20. (E) 19 Jan. **M. Shertok to I.M. Maiskii**
Emigration of 3,000 to 5,000 Polish Jews from the USSR to Palestine.

21. (R) 10 Mar. **S.A. Lozovskii to V.M. Molotov and A.S. Shcherbakov**
Visit of Mikhoels and Fefer to the US on behalf of the Anti-Fascist Committee.

22. (H) 16 Mar. **Excerpts from the Diary of E. Epstein**
Visit to the Soviet embassy in Ankara: immigration of Polish refugees to Palestine; proposal to send Jewish Agency representative to the USSR; promoting commercial ties.

23. (E) 24 Mar. **Meeting: M. Shertok and N. Goldmann – M. Litvinov**
Palestine war effort; execution of Bund leaders Alter and Ehrlich in the USSR.

24. (H) 29 Apr. **Shertok's Report to the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Labour Federation (Histadrut)**
Conversation with Maiskii concerning emigration from the USSR; Jewish military units in the British army.

25. (R) 15 May **P.S. Atroshchenkov and A. Zhegalova to V.G. Dekanozov**
Registration of Soviet citizens in Palestine; application of Soviet consular officials to visit Palestine.

26. (R) 22 May **S.A. Lozovskii to V.M. Molotov**
Instructions to delegates of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.

27. (E) 27 May **N. Goldmann to E. Beneš**
Transmission of memoranda in preparation for Beneš' meeting with Stalin.

28. (E) 25 June **Ch. Weizmann to the Soviet Jewish Delegation**
Greetings to the delegates of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.

29. (E) 14 Sept. **Meeting of the Jewish Agency Executive**
Weizmann's report on his meeting with Maiskii: Palestine's capacity for absorbing immigrants.

30. (E) 23 Sept. **Meeting: N. Goldmann – A. Gromyko**
Establishment of contact with the new Soviet ambassador to the US.

31. (H) 4 Oct. **D. Ben-Gurion's Report to the Meeting of the Jewish Agency Executive**
Maiskii's visit to Palestine; request for information on Palestine's absorptive capacity.

32. (R) 21 Dec. **Meeting: A. Sultanov – M. Shertok**
Shertok's opinion on Jewish–Arab relations in Palestine; need to increase immigration after the war.

1944

33. (R) 15 Apr. **N.V. Novikov to S.I. Kavtaradze**
Muslim Brotherhood's protests to the Soviet legation in Cairo on Zionist activities in Palestine.

34. (R) 22 July **I.V. Samylovskii to Kuznetsov**
Parcel post between Palestine and the USSR.

35. (E) 8 Aug. **D. Ben-Gurion to I.M. Maiskii**
Information on the economic potential of Palestine; absorption of 2.5 million Jews after the war.

36. (R) 9 Aug. **USSR Embassy in Turkey to L.D. Kislova**
Report on the activities of the V League in Palestine.

37. (E) 15 Aug. **Meeting: N. Goldmann – K. Umanskii**
Beneš' visit to Moscow; emigration of Central European Jews to Palestine; boundaries and security issues of the future Jewish state.

38. (H) 3 Sept. **E. Epstein to D. Ben-Gurion**
Meeting with the Soviet legation in Cairo: memorandum on Palestine's absorptive capacity; possibility of opening a Soviet legation in Palestine; contacts between Soviet Minister to Egypt and Ben-Gurion; Zionist proposal to bomb centres of Jewish extermination in Poland.

39. (R) 18 Sept. **I.V. Samylovskii to V.G. Dekanozov**
Refusal to allow Jewish organizations to assist Polish Jewish refugees in the USSR.

40. (R) 11 Oct. **A.F. Sultanov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Conversation with Musa al-Alami, Palestinian delegate to the Pan-Arab conference.

41. (E) 16 Oct. **L. Kubovitzky to Y. Gruenbaum**
Attempts to convince the Soviets to destroy Auschwitz.

42. (E) 20 Nov. **M. Shertok and E. Dobkin to A.M. Kukin**
Relief to Jewish survivors in Lublin.

43. (R) 25 Nov. **I.V. Samylovskii and A.D. Shchiborin to V.G. Dekanozov**
Soviet attitude to the creation of a pan-Arab federation; recommendation to limit contact with Palestinian Jewish organizations; return of Russian property in Palestine.

1945

44. (H) 25 Feb. **Report on the Meeting of Soviet and Palestinian Trade Union Delegates in London**
Histadrut invites Soviet trade unions to visit Palestine.

45. (R) 22 Mar. **N.F. Paisov to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Russian religious interests and property in Palestine.

46. (R) 31 Mar. **S.I. Kavtaradze to V.M. Molotov**
Desirability of establishing a Soviet consulate in Palestine.

47. (R) 8 Apr. **M.J. Mendelson to I.V. Stalin**
Request for Soviet support of Zionist demands.

48. (E) 13 Apr. **N. Goldmann to A.A. Gromyko**
Request to permit Jewish refugees in Bulgaria and Romania to leave for Palestine.

49. (E) 30 May **N. Goldmann to A.A. Gromyko**
Urges withdrawal of Soviet proposal on the trusteeship clause at the UN Conference in San Francisco.

50. (E) 10 June **B. Locker to A.M. Kukin**
Request to permit Jewish refugees in Bulgaria and Romania to leave for Palestine.

51. (R) 27 July **Memorandum of the Commission for the Preparation of Peace Agreements and Postwar Settlement**
Calls for an end to the British Mandate and proposes temporary trusteeship over Palestine by the USSR or collective trusteeship by the USSR, Great Britain and the US.

52. (H) 26 Sept. **Meeting of the National Secretariat of the V League**
Report on the meeting of a V League delegation with the Soviet chargé d'affaires in London in August; request to visit USSR.

53. (R) 20 Oct. **I.V. Samylovskii and V. Maliarov to V.G. Dekanozov**
Legal status of Russian property in Palestine; review of Soviet–British diplomatic correspondence on Russian property.

54. (R) 15 Nov. **Meeting of the Commission for the Preparation of Peace Agreements and Postwar Settlement**
Cancellation of the scheduled discussion of the Jewish question.

1946

55. (E) 1 Jan. **'P.' to M. Shertok**
Conversation with the TASS correspondent in Cairo: increasing Soviet interest in Palestine; arrival of Russian pilgrims.

56. (R) 3 Jan. **D.S. Solod to I.V. Samylovskii**
Anglo-American rivalries in the Middle East; right of the USSR to be involved in a resolution of the Palestine question.

57. (E) 1 Feb. **'P.' to D. Ben-Gurion**
Conversation with the TASS correspondent in Cairo: impressions of his visit to Palestine; kibbutzim as a socialist experiment.

58. (R) 27 Apr. **Major-General Basilov to I.V. Samylovskii**
Repatriation of Soviet citizens in Palestine to the USSR.

59. (R) 15 May **Memorandum by M.A. Maksimov**
Review of recommendations made by the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry; central points of the Soviet position on Palestine.

60. (E) 21 May **N. Goldmann to L. Toledano**
Jewish Agency requests meeting with Soviet government officials in Moscow or with Molotov outside the USSR.

61. (H) 22 May **L. Tarnopoler to the Board of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR**
Meeting with Agaronov, the Soviet vice-consul in Beirut.

62. (E) 12 June **'P.' to the Political Department of the Jewish Agency**
Conversation with Shvedov, the first secretary of the Soviet legation in Cairo: relations contingent upon attitude toward the USSR.

63. (H) 28 June **E. Sasson to E. Epstein**
Analysis of Soviet position on the Palestine question by the Jewish Agency expert on Arab affairs.

64. (R) 12 July **V.Z. Lebedev to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Meeting of the counselor of the USSR embassy in Warsaw with a delegation of Jewish representatives from Palestine.

65. (R) 13 Aug. **D.S. Solod to I.V. Samylovskii**
British and US policy on Palestine.

66. (R) 4 Sept. **K.D. Golubev to A.A. Smirnov**
Exodus of Jewish refugees from Poland to Palestine.

67. (R) 6 Sept. **M.A. Maksimov to V.G. Dekanozov**
Comments on the report of the Anglo-American Committee of Experts.

68. (R) 17 Sept. **A.A. Smirnov, M.A. Maksimov and L.F. Teplov to V.G. Dekanozov**
Recommendation to advise Soviet diplomatic representatives in Eastern Europe not to interfere in the exodus of Jewish refugees to Palestine.

69. (E) 15 Nov. **Memorandum by L. Gelber**
Novikov's comments on Palestine in the Trusteeship Council.

70. (E) 19 Nov. **Report of J. Robinson at a Meeting of the American Zionist Emergency Council**
Proposal to initiate a campaign to educate the American Jewish public regarding the situation of Soviet Jewry and to encourage American Jewish organizations to take a more militant stand.

71. (R) 17 Dec. **D.S. Solod to I.V. Samylovskii**
Survey of British and American initiatives for resolving the Palestine question and reactions of Arabs and Jews.

1947

72. (E) 25 Feb. **Memorandum by W. Eytan**
Analysis of the position of Soviet bloc countries on the Palestine question in anticipation of the forthcoming UN session.

73. (R) 5 Mar. **M.A. Maksimov and S. Nemchinov to A.Ia.Vyshinskii**
London Conference on Palestine; tentative Soviet position on Palestine question

74. (R) 6 Mar. **B.E. Shtein to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Review of British and American positions on the Palestine question; suggestions for a tentative Soviet position.

75. (R) 14 Mar. **I.V. Samylovskii to Ia.A. Malik**
USSR Foreign Ministry guidelines on the Palestine question for the Soviet UN delegation.

76. (R) 26 Mar. **I.V. Samylovskii to D.S. Solod**
Comments on Solod's assessment of US policy in the Middle East.

77. (R) 12 Apr. **Memorandum by M.A. Maksimov**
Tentative Soviet position for forthcoming UN deliberations on Palestine; Jewish question in Western Europe; Soviet attitude towards establishment of a collective protectorate over Palestine under UN auspices.

78. (R) 15 Apr. **Memorandum by the Middle East Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Tentative Soviet position on Palestine; attitude toward establishment of a protectorate; composition of a UN special commission for Palestine.

79. (R) 28 Apr. **Memorandum by the Jewish Agency**
Support for a UN special commission for Palestine; aims and composition of commission; agenda of the UN Special Session on Palestine.

80. (E) 28 Apr. **Memorandum by the Jewish Agency**
Survey of the Palestine question.

81. (E) 29 Apr. **D.R. Wahl to M. Grossman**
Attempts to arrange a meeting with Gromyko.

82. (E) 29 Apr. **I. Hamlin to A. Lourie**
Providing the USSR delegation at the UN with material on Palestine.

83. (E) 14 May **A.A. Gromyko's Speech at the First Special Session of the UN General Assembly**
Advocates the creation of an Arab–Jewish state in Palestine or the partition of Palestine into two states.

84. (E) 15 May **D.R. Wahl to A.H. Silver**
Meetings with Soviet embassy officials and delegation to the UN.

85. (E) 20 May **Ch. Greenberg to B. Locker**
Ben-Gurion's meeting with Gromyko: partition of Palestine.

86. (H) 29 May **Circular of the Mapai Central Committee to its Emissaries Abroad**
Discussion of Gromyko's speech at the UN.

87. (H) 25 June **E. Epstein to the Jewish Agency Executive**
Yugoslav under-secretary of foreign affairs Velebit on Soviet approach to European Jewry and emigration to Palestine.

88. (R) 30 July **I.N. Bakulin to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Activities of the UN Special Committee on Palestine; Soviet position on Palestine prior to the submission of UNSCOP's report.

89. (R) 31 July **Memorandum of I.N. Bakulin on UNSCOP**
Survey of UNSCOP meetings and discussions.

90. (E) 31 July **E. Epstein to the Jewish Agency Executive**
Conversation with Vavilov of the Soviet embassy in Washington: reactions to Gromyko's speech in the US and Palestine.

91. (E) 11 Sept. **E. Epstein to the Jewish Agency Executive**
Conversation with Vavilov: UNSCOP report; attitude of the US public towards Zionism, relations between the future Zionist state and the USSR.

92. (E) 22 Sept. **E. Epstein's Memorandum of a Conversation with S.K. Tsarapkin**
Tsarapkin's attitude toward the UNSCOP minority report.

93. (H) 23 Sept. **A. Levavi to G. Meyerson**
Meeting with Khangulov of the Soviet legation in Beirut: relations between the Jewish community in Palestine and the USSR.

94. (R) 30 Sept. **V.M. Molotov to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Instructions to support the UNSCOP majority report.

95. (R) 30 Sept. **V.M. Molotov to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Motives for Soviet support of the majority report.

96. (R) 15 Oct. **A.Ia. Vyshinskii to V.M. Molotov**
Jewish and Arab reactions to Soviet statement in support of UNSCOP majority recommendations.

97. (R) 16 Oct. **V.M. Molotov to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Instructions to support Colombian proposal in the Ad Hoc Committee.

98. (H) 18 Oct. **M. Yuval to D. Ben-Gurion**
Shertok's meeting with Tsarapkin: decisions of the Ad Hoc Committee; composition of the subcommittee for implementation of the partition; borders of the Jewish state.

99. (R) 23 Oct. **Memorandum by A. Timofeev**
History of the Palestine question in the UN; Moscow's instructions to Gromyko and Vyshinskii.

100. (R) 26 Oct. **V.M. Molotov to I.V. Stalin**
Approval of Vyshinskii's proposals regarding the Soviet approach to the transition period in Palestine.

101. (E) 5 Nov. **L. Gelber to the Jewish Agency Executive**
Meeting with Dean Rusk of the US delegation: Rusk's analysis of Soviet attitudes towards Jewish Palestine.

102. (R) 5 Nov. **A. Sultanov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Arab reactions to the Soviet position at the UN; Sultanov on the repercussions of creating a Jewish state in Palestine.

103. (R) 18 Nov. **A.Ia. Vyshinskii to V.M. Molotov**
Soviet position on discussions at the UN regarding the status of Jerusalem.

104. (E) 26 Nov. **A.A. Gromyko's Speech at the Second Session of the UN General Assembly**
Appeal for support of the partition plan.

Editorial Note
United Nations resolution on the partition of Palestine.

105. (E) 4 Dec. **A.H. Silver to A.A. Gromyko**
Expression of gratitude to the USSR.

106. (R) 8 Dec. **S.K. Tsarapkin to V.M. Molotov**
Conversation with Shertok and Epstein: implementation of the UN partition resolution.

107. (R) 18 Dec. **S.K. Tsarapkin to V.M. Molotov**
Conversation with Epstein: situation in Palestine; constitution of the future Jewish state and its relations with the Great Powers.

108. (E) 26 Dec. **Meeting: M. Shertok – A.A. Sobolev**
Establishment of an international force for Palestine; security situation in Palestine.

1948

109. (R) 23 Jan. **V.A. Zorin to V.M. Molotov**
Soviet position on Czechoslovakia's supply of arms to Syria.

110. (R) 23 Jan. **Meeting: D.S. Solod – Riyad al-Sulh**
Lebanese Prime Minister on Arab opposition to the partition resolution.

111. (R) 29 Jan. **Meeting: S.K. Tsarapkin – E. Epstein**
Implementation of the partition resolution; departure of UN commission to Palestine

112. (R) 9 Feb. **Meeting: S.K. Tsarapkin – E. Epstein**
Information on alleged US intention to revise position on Palestine.

113. (E) 12 Feb. **G. Ruffer to M. Shertok**
US military and diplomatic opposition to Soviet participation in the international force in Palestine.

114. (E) 13 Feb. **M. Shertok to D. Ben-Gurion**
Request for Gromyko's intervention in Czechoslovak supply of arms to Syria.

115. (R) 6 Mar. **K. Sergeichuk to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Exchange of parcel post between the USSR and Palestine.

Editorial Note
The shift in US policy towards Palestine.

116. (H) 26 Mar. **Memorandum by W. Eytan, A. Levavi, Ch. Herzog, H. Berman, E. Sasson**
Planning for political contacts with Arab states and the Slav bloc.

117. (R) 9 Apr. **V.M. Molotov to I.V. Stalin**
Soviet rejection of US proposals for a trusteeship over Palestine.

118. (R) 13 Apr. **A.S. Semioshkin to A.A. Gromyko**
Review of the situation in Palestine after the UN resolution on partition.

119. (E) 20 Apr. **A.A. Gromyko's Speech at the Second Special Session of the UN General Assembly**
Defence of the partition plan; USSR to vote against the US proposal for the establishment of trusteeship in Palestine.

120. (E) 15 May **M. Shertok to V.M. Molotov**
Request for official recognition of the State of Israel.

121. (R) 15 May **I.N. Bakulin to V.A. Zorin**
Recommendation to send a member of the USSR legation in Beirut to Palestine to represent Soviet interests there.

122. (E) 18 May **V.M. Molotov to M. Shertok**
Soviet recognition of the State of Israel.

123. (R) 18 May **G. Kheifets to L.S. Baranov**
Soviet Jews approach the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee with offers to collect funds for Jews in Palestine; proposal to establish a Soviet Jewish brigade to be sent to Palestine.

124. (E) 22 May **M. Shertok to E. Epstein**
Application to US and USSR for Soviet military assistance.

125. (R) 25 May **V.M. Molotov to M. Shertok**
Soviet consent to the establishment of an Israeli mission in Moscow and Soviet mission in Tel Aviv.

126. (R) 31 May **G. Kheifets to L.S. Baranov**
Letters and appeals received by the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee from Soviet Jews wishing to assist the Jewish state.

127. (R) 5 June **I.N. Bakulin to V.A. Zorin**
Soviet support of the Czechoslovak arms deal with the Jewish state.

128. (R) 7 June **Minutes of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee Meeting**
Discussion of proposed statement on Palestine.

129. (H) 9 June **M. Shertok to E. Epstein**
Requests USSR to permit visit of extraordinary Israeli mission for acquisition of military equipment and foodstuffs.

130. (H) 13 June **Memorandum by A. Levavi**
Tasks of the East European Division of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

131. (R) 16 June **I.N. Bakulin and M. Buev to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Exchange of parcel post between Israel and the USSR.

132. (E) 16 June **M. Shertok to E. Epstein**
Attempt to purchase fuel from Romania.

133. (E) 18 June **E. Epstein to M. Shertok**
Nomination of Ershov as USSR minister in Israel.

134. (E) 20 June **M. Shertok to E. Epstein**
Israeli agreement to the nomination of Ershov; biographical sketch of Golda Meyerson.

135. (R) 23 June **A.Ia. Vyshinskii to N.D. Psurtsev**
Exchange of parcel post between the USSR and Israel.

136. (E) 23 June **M. Shertok to E. Epstein**
Suggests to discuss with Gromyko purchase of Soviet planes and heavy military equipment.

137. (R) 24 June **G.G. Karpov to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Message from the Greek Orthodox patriarch of Jerusalem to the patriarch of Moscow concerning the holy places in Jerusalem.

138. (R) 30 June **N.M. Shvernik to Ch. Weizmann**
Appointment of Ershov as minister to Israel.

139. (E) 7 July **M. Shertok to A. Eban**
Request for Soviet support in Israeli attempt to prolong truce in Palestine.

140. (E) 22 July **M. Shertok to E. Epstein**
Request for early arrival of Soviet minister.

141. (E) 23 July **A. Eban to M. Shertok**
Report on the conversation with USSR representative at the UN Security Council Iakov Malik.

142. (R) 26 July **Avetisov and Biiazi to P.I. Ershov**
Dispatch of Soviet films to Israel.

143. (R) 9 Aug. **Meeting: M. Silin – E. Überall**
Meeting with the Soviet ambassador in Prague; survey of the situation in Israel and bilateral relations; departure of Meyerson for Moscow.

144. (R) 11 Aug. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Shertok**
Preliminary meeting with the Soviet minister before the presentation of credentials.

145. (E) 12 Aug. **A. Eban to M. Shertok**
Conversation with Malik: nature of Arab society and culture; prospects of the State of Israel.

146. (H) 12 Aug. **Hapoel Sports Association to G. Meyerson**
Promotion of contacts between Israel and the USSR in the field of sport.

147. (R) 13 Aug. **Meeting: M.L. Mukhin – S. Tsirulnikov**
Tsirulnikov's survey of the domestic political scene In Israel.

148. (R) 14 Aug. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – G. Meyerson**
Meyerson's departure for Moscow; immigration to Israel and supply of housing.

149. (R) 14 Aug. **M.P. Fedorin to V.A. Zorin**
Impressions from a meeting of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

150. (R) 17 Aug. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – D. Ben-Gurion**
Presentation of credentials; Ben-Gurion's expression of gratitude to the USSR.

151. (R) 26 Aug. **A.A. Gromyko to V.M. Molotov**
Instructions to the Soviet delegation at the UN.

152. (H) 26 Aug. **D. Ben-Gurion to N.M. Shvernik**
Letter of accreditation of Golda Meyerson.

153. (R) 31 Aug. **Meeting: M.P. Fedorin – L. Tarnopoler**
Tarnopoler's report on the activities of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

154. (R) 2 Sept. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Shertok**
Shertok's report on discussions with representatives of the UN mediator on immigration to Israel during the truce.

155. (H) 6 Sept. **G. Meyerson to M. Shertok**
Meyerson's impressions on arrival in Moscow.

156. (R) 7 Sept. **Meeting: V.M. Molotov – G. Meyerson**
Soviet transcript of reception of Meyerson by Molotov: situation in Israel and relations with the Arab states.

157. (H) 7 Sept. **G. Meyerson to M. Shertok**
Meyerson's report on reception by Molotov.

158. (R) 10 Sept. **V.A. Zorin to G.G. Karpov**
Management of Russian property in Jerusalem.

159. (H) 11 Sept. **G. Meyerson to M. Shertok**
Presentation of credentials to Vlasov.

160. (H) 12 Sept. **G. Meyerson to M. Shertok**
Visit to the Moscow synagogue and meeting with Rabbi Shlifer.

161. (H) 12 Sept. **Sh. Friedman to G. Meyerson**
Report on relations with the Soviet legation in Israel; search for relatives in the USSR.

162. (H) 13 Sept. **Meeting: Y. Ratner – I. Seraev**
Advanced courses for Israeli officers in the USSR; acquisition of Soviet military textbooks.

163. (R) 13 Sept. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – Y. Rabinovich**
Russian property in Israel.

164. (R) 15 Sept. **Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – G. Meyerson**
Immigration to Israel.

165. (R) 16 Sept. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Shertok**
Report on US approach to Israel concerning solution of the Palestine dispute.

166. (R) 17 Sept. **Excerpt from the Instructions of the USSR Delegation to the Third Session of the UN General Assembly**
Future government of Palestine.

167. (R) 17 Sept. **Meeting: F.T. Gusev – G. Meyerson**
Practical difficulties of the Israeli legation in Moscow; situation of Jewish internees in Cyprus; Palestine question at the forthcoming Third Session of the UN General Assembly.

168. (R) 18 Sept. **G.M. Malenkov to I.V. Stalin**
Stalin's instruction to prepare article on Israel; Erenburg's *Pravda* article about Israel and the Jews.

169. (R) 20 Sept. **Meeting: M.L. Mukhin – W. Eytan**
Practical difficulties of the Soviet legation In Tel Aviv; draft of Soviet citizens into the Israeli army.

170. (R) 21 Sept. **Meeting: I.B. Konzhukov – M. Namir**
Israeli citizens' inquiries concerning relatives in the USSR.

171. (R) 22 Sept. **A.D. Shchiborin to V.A. Zorin**
Application of Jewish refugees in Harbin to immigrate to Israel.

172. (R) 23 Sept. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – Y. Riftin and L. Levite**
Mapam position *vis-à-vis* the Israeli-Arab conflict and in Israeli domestic politics; Riftin's meeting with Gromyko in the US.

173. (H) 24 Sept. **G. Meyerson to M. Shertok**
Expressions of qualified Soviet support for Israel; Erenburg's article in *Pravda* rejects the idea of Jewish emigration to Israel from the USSR and the Eastern bloc.

174. (R) 27 Sept. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Shertok**
Israel's attitude towards Bernadotte's proposals; Lie's proposal regarding UN security forces; UN Conciliation Commission.

175. (H) 28 Sept. **Sh. Friedman to G. Meyerson**
Report on Ershov's meeting with Shertok; meetings of Soviet legation officials with various Israeli figures; Israeli attitude

toward the Palestinian Arab government in Gaza; inter-Arab tensions; search for relatives in the USSR.

176. (H) 30 Sept. **Sh. Friedman to M. Shertok**
Meeting with Mukhin: Erenburg's article; Soviet Jewry; immigration of Jews to Israel.

177. (R) 5 Oct. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – Ch. Weizmann**
Courtesy visit to Weizmann.

178. (H) 6 Oct. **Y. Ratner to D. Ben-Gurion**
Meeting with Antonov: training of Israeli military personnel in the USSR; arms purchase from the USSR.

179. (R) 6 Oct. **I.V. Polianskii to V. Molotov**
Visit of the Israeli legation staff to the Moscow synagogue on the Jewish High Holidays.

180. (H) 6 Oct. **G. Meyerson to W. Eytan**
Reports of the Israeli legation staff on visits to the Moscow synagogue; Soviet recommendations to Rabbi Shlifer regarding behaviour toward the Israeli legation.

181. (R) 9 Oct. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sneh**
Sneh's views on developments in Israel and the policies of the Israeli government.

182. (R) 14 Oct. **Instructions of the Council of Ministers of the USSR**
Nomination of Archimandrite Leonid as head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem.

183. (R) 14 Oct. **Meeting: V.S. Vasilenko – A. Levavi**
Publication of a bulletin by the Israeli legation in Moscow.

184. (R) 19 Oct. **V.M. Molotov to I.V. Stalin**
Soviet position on the Security Council resolution regarding the assassination of Bernadotte.

185. (R) 20 Oct. **V.M. Molotov to I.V. Stalin**
Soviet position on Bernadotte's proposals for Palestine.

186. (R) 20 Oct. **P.I. Ershov to V.A. Zorin**
Formulation of the Soviet stance *vis-à-vis* the activities of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

187. (R) 21 Oct. **Meeting: A.P. Vlasov – M. Namir**
Permission for Israeli citizens residing in the USSR to leave for Israel; transit visas via the USSR for Israeli citizens in Harbin wishing to go to Israel; immigration of Soviet citizens with relatives in Israel.

188. (H) 26 Oct. **Excerpts from M. Shertok's Report to the Provisional Government of Israel**
Shertok's meetings with Vyshinskii, Malik, Tsarapkin and Manuil'skii; Israeli-Soviet cooperation in the Security Council.

189. (R) 27 Oct. **Transcript of Conversation between M. Podvigin and A. Levavi**
Soviet support of Israel's application for membership in the Universal Postal Union.

190. (R) 30 Oct. **M. Men'shikov to V.M. Molotov**
Soviet attitude toward trade agreements with Israel.

191. (R) 4 Nov. **I.N. Bakulin to Iu.M. Kaganovich**
Supply of Soviet books to Israel.

192. (F) 4 Nov. **D. Ben-Gurion to I.V. Stalin**
Greetings on the occasion of the anniversary of the October Revolution.

193. (H) 5 Nov. **M. Shertok to G. Meyerson**
Discussion of Israeli borders at the Paris session of the General Assembly; admission of Israel to the UN.

194. (H) 7 Nov. **D. Ben-Gurion to Y. Ratner**
List of arms requested from the USSR.

195. (H) 9 Nov. **G. Meyerson to W. Eytan**
Israeli legation's attendance at the October Revolution parade; Molotov reception.

196. (R) 12 Nov. **I.N. Bakulin to N.G. Pal'gunov**
Supply of TASS information to agencies in Israel.

197. (R) 12 Nov. **I.N. Bakulin to A.I. Denisov**
Improvement of cultural ties with Israel.

198. (R) 12 Nov. **M. Sladkovskii to I.N. Bakulin**
Soviet Ministry of Foreign Trade representative to legation in Israel in the wake of Israeli-Soviet trade agreement.

199. (H) 17 Nov. **Sh. Friedman to G. Meyerson and M. Namir**
Prisoners of Zion in the USSR.

200. (R) 18 Nov. **I.V. Stalin to D. Ben-Gurion**
Acknowledgement for congratulations on October Revolution anniversary.

201. (H) 21 Nov. **Sh. Friedman to M. Shertok and G. Meyerson**
Meetings with Ershov; military situation in the Negev; purchase of steel pipes in Czechoslovakia.

202. (R) 24 Nov. **I.N. Bakulin to V.A. Zorin**
Soviet response to Israel's request for arms.

203. (R) 30 Nov. **I.V. Polianskii to V.A. Zorin**
Repercussions of Israeli legation staff visit to Moscow synagogue.

204. (H) 2 Dec. **M. Namir to W. Eytan**
Conversation with Erenburg on Jewish immigration to Israel; possible revision of Soviet position on emigration of Jews from Eastern Europe.

205. (H) 10 Dec. **M. Namir to Sh. Friedman**
Removal of signboard of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.

206. (H) 12 Dec. **Meeting: M. Sharett – A. Vyshinskii**
Immigration to Israel from Eastern Europe.

207. (H) 16 Dec. **M. Namir to G. Meyerson and Sh. Friedman**
Attack on the Israeli press in *Novoe vremia*.

208. (R) 22 Dec. **V.A. Zorin to G.G. Karpov**
Russian clergy and property in Israel; arrival of Archimandrite Leonid.

209. (H) 27 Dec. **Meeting: D. Ben-Gurion – P.I. Ershov**
Military situation in the Negev; Soviet–American relations.

210. (H) 31 Dec. **Sh. Friedman to M. Namir**
Military situation in the Negev; prospects for settlement with the Arab countries.

1949

211. (H) 11 Jan. **Meeting: Sh. Friedman – M.L. Mukhin**
Briefing the Soviet legation on military developments in the Negev.

212. (R) 19 Jan. **Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – G. Meyerson**
Gratitude for Soviet position at the UN; refutation of allegations regarding the Jewish National Fund.

213. (R) 20 Jan. **Meeting: A.Ia. Vyshinskii – G. Meyerson**
Gratitude for Soviet position at the UN; request for the immigration of relatives to Israel and negative response by Vyshinskii.

214. (R) 21 Jan. **I.N. Bakulin to P.I. Ershov**
Intensifying Soviet propaganda in Israel; publication of bulletin by USSR legation in Israel.

215. (H) 22 Jan. **G. Meyerson to M. Sharett**
Report on conversation with Vyshinskii.

Editorial Note
Elections in Israel and the establishment of a new government.

216. (H) 26 Jan. **Sh. Friedman to G. Meyerson**
Sharett's meeting with the Soviet minister in Israel: cease-fire negotiation in Rhodes; talks with Lebanese delegation; Israel's occupation of Eilat; US Export–Import Bank loan.

217. (H) 1 Feb. **Meeting: Sh. Friedman – P.I. Ershov**
Protest over Soviet publications critical of Israel; Russian property in Israel.

218. (H) 3 Feb. **Meeting: Sh. Friedman – P.I. Ershov**
US intention to raise the level of representation in Israel.

219. (R) 7 Feb. **Meeting: V.A. Zorin – G. Meyerson**
Charges of illegal activity of the Israeli legation in Moscow in encouraging Soviet citizens to emigrate and distribution of the legation bulletin.

220. (R) 7 Feb. ***Note Verbale* of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Israeli Minister in Moscow**
Charges of illegal activity of the Israeli legation.

221. (H) 9 Feb. **G. Meyerson to M. Sharett**
Meyerson's transcript of a conversation with Zorin: allegations of illegal activity of the Israeli legation.

222. (H) 9 Feb. **Sh. Friedman to the Israeli Legation in Moscow**
Meeting with the Soviet minister: Russian property In Israel.

223. (R) 10 Feb. **P.I. Ershov to I.N. Bakulin**
Support for the publication of a bulletin by the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

224. (R) 10 Feb. **V.A. Zorin to V.A. Sergeev**
Decline of the proposal to establish a joint shipping line between Haifa and the Danubian ports.

225. (R) 10 Feb. **M.P. Fedorin to Iu. Kosiakina**
Soviet exhibitions in Israel.

226. (H) 13 Feb. **M. Sharett to G. Meyerson**
Elath's meeting with the Soviet ambassador in Washington: inquires whether Israel intends to join the Marshall plan.

227. (H) 17 Feb. **M. Namir to M. Shertok**
Circulation of Israeli legation bulletin; dispatch of letters to Soviet Jews with relatives in Israel.

228. (R) 28 Feb. **Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – M. Namir**
Signing of cease-fire agreement between Israel and Egypt.

229. (R) 2 Mar. **M.P. Fedorin to Iu. Kosiakina**
Organization of cultural activities by the Soviet legation in Israel.

230. (H) 10 Mar. **M. Namir to Sh. Friedman**
Proposed visit by Sharett to the USSR and Eastern Europe; intensification of activity aimed at encouraging Jewish emigration from Eastern Europe.

231. (H) 14 Mar. **M. Sharett to M. Namir**
Meeting with Ershov: difficulties in emigration of Jews from Romania

232. (R) 14 Mar. **Meeting: A.Ia. Vyshinskii – M. Namir**
Courtesy meeting with Vyshinskii on the occasion of his appointment as minister of foreign affairs.

233. (R) 15 Mar. **I.N. Bakulin to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Evaluation of the new government in Israel.

234. (H) 18 Mar. **M. Namir to Sh. Friedman**
Anti-cosmopolitan campaign in the USSR; Namir's views on nationalities policies in the USSR and their impact on the Jews there.

235. (H) 24 Mar. **Ch. Herzog to Y. Ratner**
Training of Israeli officers in the USSR.

236. (H) 1 Apr. **Sh. Friedman to the Israeli Legation in Moscow**
Weizmann's forthcoming trip to the US; rumours about a new Soviet policy on emigration from East Europe and the USSR.

237. (H) 8 Apr. **G. Meyerson to W. Eytan**
Ratner's conversations with General Seraev: Soviet inquiries regarding transport alternatives in the event of closure of the Suez Canal and intentions to remove leftist influences from the Israeli army.

238. (R) 14 Apr. **A.Ia. Vyshinskii to I.V. Stalin**
Farewell visit of Meyerson to Vyshinskii: political orientation of Israel; supply of arms from the USSR; trade relations; immigration to Israel from Eastern bloc countries.

239. (H) 14 Apr. **Excerpts from Diary of M. Namir**
Report on Meyerson's farewell visit to Vyshinskii.

240. (E) 18 Apr. **Statement by G. Meyerson**
Farewell statement.

241. (E) 23 Apr. **M. Namir to M. Sharett**
American and French telegraph agencies on Meyerson's meeting with Vyshinskii and the issue of Jewish emigration.

242. (R) 13 May **Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – M. Namir**
Israeli gratitude for Soviet support of Israeli admission to the UN.

■ ■ ■

PART II

1949

243. (H) 17 May **Meeting: Sh. Friedman – M.L. Mukhin**
Peace negotiations in Lausanne; relations with Arab states; Israel's request for loan from the USSR; Russian property issues.

244. (H) 2 June **M. Namir to M. Sharett**
Commercial and military relations with the USSR.

245. (H) 5 June **M. Namir to Sh. Friedman**
Mapai's attitude to the Israel–USSR Friendship League and to Mapam.

246. (H) 6 June **Memorandum by A. Levavi**
Israel's place in postwar bloc politics.

247. (F) 12 June **Sh. Friedman to M. Namir**
Arrest of Yiddish writers in the USSR.

248. (R) 21 June **Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – M. Namir**
US pressure on Israel to make concessions to the Arabs; Israel requests Soviet support for recognition of the Red Shield of David emblem at the Geneva conference.

249. (R) 27 June **M.L. Mukhin to I.N. Bakulin**
Political struggles within the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

250. (R) 29 June **Meeting: A.Ia. Vyshinskii – M. Namir**
Report on invitation to Gromyko to visit Israel.

251. (H) 30 June **M. Namir to M. Sharett**
Meeting with Vyshinskii: survey of the situation in Israel; Vyshinskii's doubts that the invitation to Gromyko would be accepted.

252. (R) 4 July **L. Kislova to Ia.M. Lomakin**
Reorganization of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR; VOKS exhibitions in Israel.

253. (R) 5 July **I.N. Bakulin to N.M. Shvernik**
Background information on Israel and biographical sketch of Namir on his appointment as minister to Moscow.

254. (H) 8 July **M. Namir to M. Sharett**
Conversation with Gromyko and Shvernik at the ceremony of Namir's presentation of credentials: immigration to Israel; settlement of the Negev.

255. (R) 11 July **Meeting: A.A. Gromyko – M. Namir**
Israel's request for credit from the USSR; Soviet support for Israel's application for membership in the Universal Postal Union.

256. (R) 12 July **Meeting: B.F. Podtserob – M. Namir**
Soviet credits for housing ventures in Israel.

257. (R) 14 July **A.Ia. Vyshinskii to I.V. Stalin**
Recommends rejecting invitation to Gromyko to visit Israel on the grounds that it is aimed at bringing about a deterioration in Soviet-Arab relations.

258. (H) 24 July **Sh. Eliashiv (Friedman) to M. Namir**
Contacts between Soviet and Israeli trade union representatives at the WFTU congress in Milan; Soviet opposition to raising the issue of immigration to Israel at the congress plenary session.

259. (R) 8 Aug. **Memorandum by A.S. Semioshkin**
Russian church property in Nazareth and Tiberias; conflict between Arab and Greek orthodox clergy.

260. (R) 31 Aug. **Memorandum by I.N. Bakulin and G.T. Zaitsev**
Points for a speech on the question of assistance to Palestinian refugees; Soviet proposal to dissolve the UN Conciliation Commission.

261. (R) 3 Sept. **V.M. Ankudinov to I.N. Bakulin**
Licensing and dispatch of parcels from Israel to the USSR.

262. (R) 3 Sept. **Excerpt from a Memorandum by I.N. Bakulin, G.T. Zaitsev and V.V. Gnedykh**
Background paper of the Middle East Department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry for the forthcoming session of the UN General Assembly on the history of the Palestine question.

263. (H) 11 Sept. **M. Sharett to M. Eliash**
Portrayal by Sharett of Israel's policy of non-alignment: emigration from Eastern Europe; need for Soviet assistance in the international arena.

264. (R) 19 Sept. **Meeting: A.A. Gromyko – Sh. Eliashiv**
Conciliation Commission's proposals on Jerusalem; exposition of Israel's position on Jerusalem; USSR–Israel trade relations.

265. (R) 20 Sept. **Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – Sh. Eliashiv**
Russian property in Palestine.

266. (R) 29 Sept. **I.N. Bakulin to A.A. Gromyko**
Instructions to the Soviet minister in Israel on issues of immigration, opposition parties and the League for Friendly Relations.

267. (R) 29 Sept. **M.P. Fedorin to Ia. Kosiakina**
Dispatch of Soviet books to Israel.

268. (R) 30 Sept. **I.N. Bakulin to A.A. Gromyko**
Opposition to Israel's request for credit from the USSR.

269. (H) 4 Oct. **M. Sharett to M. Namir**
Refutation of allegations that the Israeli army is structuring itself according to an American model.

270. (R) 5 Oct. **Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – M. Namir**
Israel's request for Soviet specialist on forestry; application for admission to the Universal Postal Union; denial of reports that American instructors had been invited to reorganize the Israeli army.

271. (H) 5 Oct. **M. Namir to M. Sharett**
Reception of legation staff at the Moscow synagogue; rumours of expulsions and deportations of Jews.

272. (E) 14 Oct. **M. Sharett to A. Eban**
Instructions prior to Eban's meeting with Vyshinskii.

273. (H) 15 Oct. **M. Sharett to M. Namir**
Suggestion to pursue a more active policy *vis-à-vis* the USSR on the question of Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel; publication in the West of an underground poem by a Jewish author.

274. (H) 21 Oct. **A. Levavi to M. Sharett**
Advocacy of a more moderate line with regard to Soviet Jewish emigration.

275. (H) 21 Oct. **M. Namir to M. Sharett**
Israeli–Soviet relations in light of the deterioration in East–West relations; calls for Israeli outspokenness in regard to the Jewish problem in the USSR but advises caution in publishing material by local Jews.

276. (H) 4 Nov. **Sh. Eliashiv to Israeli Legations in Moscow, Prague, Warsaw and Budapest**
Clarification of Ben-Gurion's speech attacking Jewish communists.

277. (R) 10 Nov. **Meeting: M.A. Maksimov – M. Namir**
British request for representation on the board of the port of Haifa; deleterious effect of the Palestine Conciliation Commission on Arab-Israeli relations; Soviet mediation between Israel and Pakistan.

278. (R) 15 Nov. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett**
Israeli attitude towards the Arab Security Pact; Israeli press treatment of the USSR.

279. (H) 15 Nov. **Meeting: M. Sharett and Sh. Eliashiv – P.I. Ershov**
Israeli account of meeting with Ershov.

280. (H) 1 Dec. **M. Sharett to W. Eytan**
Meeting with Tsarapkin: Soviet position on the internationalization of Jerusalem.

281. (H) 4 Dec. **A. Levavi to Sh. Eliashiv**
Suggestion to send congratulatory message to Stalin on his 70th birthday.

282. (H) 6 Dec. **Meeting: W. Eytan – P.I. Ershov**
The question of internationalizing Jerusalem.

283. (R) 7 Dec. **P.I. Ershov to A.I. Lavrent'ev**
Anti-Soviet position of the Israeli press.

284. (R) 7 Dec. **Excerpts from a Memorandum by M. Popov**
Survey of Israeli press treatment of Soviet foreign policy and domestic issues.

285. (R) 7 Dec. **M.P. Fedorin to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Celebration in Israel of the anniversary of the October Revolution.

286. (R) 7 Dec. **Meeting: A.D. Shchiborin – A. Levavi**
Israeli position on the Jerusalem question.

287. (H) 13 Dec. **G. Rafael to M. Sharett**
Meeting with Tsarapkin: the Jerusalem question; Soviet policy on the Palestine question; Tsarapkin on Israel's Western orientation as revealed at the UN.

288. (R) 14 Dec. **M. Buev, K.A. Mikhailov and A.D. Shchiborin to A.A. Gromyko**
Guidelines for drawing the borders of Palestine.

1950

289. (H) 2 Jan. **Y. Barnea to M. Sharett**
Suggestion for abolishing the position of Israeli military attaché in Moscow.

290. (R) 9 Jan. **A.Ia. Vyshinskii to P.I. Ershov**
Malik's report on conversation with Sharett; emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel.

291. (R) 23 Jan. **USSR Legation in Israel to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Drafting Soviet citizens living in Israel into military service.

292. (H) 25 Jan. **M. Namir to M. Sharett**
The need for maintaining a military attaché at the Israeli legation in Moscow; Israeli–Romanian relations; Israeli concept of friendly neutrality *vis-à-vis* the blocs.

293. (H) 1 Feb. **M. Namir to Sh. Eliashiv**
Recommendation to abstain in vote on South Korean admission to the Universal Postal Union.

294. (H) 2 Feb. **M. Namir to Sh. Eliashiv**
Counterproductivity of protesting anti-Israel reports in the Soviet press.

295. (R) 2 Feb. **USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Israeli Legation in USSR**
Refusal to pay military pensions to ex-Soviet citizens living in Israel.

296. (H) 3 Feb. **M. Namir to M. Sharett**
Commercial relations with the USSR; calls to appoint Israeli commercial attaché.

297. (R) 3 Feb. **Meeting: I.B. Konzhukov – A. Levavi**
Obtaining divorce certificates by Israeli citizens from former spouses in the USSR.

298. (R) 9 Feb. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Sharett's responses to questions of Mapam representatives on Israel's foreign policy.

299. (H) 10 Feb. **M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Rumours of repressive measures against the Jews in the USSR.

300. (H) 22 Feb. **Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the USSR Legation in Israel**
Drafting Soviet citizens resident in Israel into the Israeli army.

301. (H) 28 Feb. **Sh. Eliashiv to M. Namir**
Decline in frequency of encounters with Soviet diplomatic representatives in Israel; withholding information about Israeli–Jordanian negotiations from the Soviet minister in Israel.

302. (H) 2 Mar. **M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Anti-Israeli posture of the Soviet press.

303. (R) 3 Mar. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett**
Sharett's report on Israel's negotiations with Jordan; Soviet note regarding draft of Soviet citizens into the Israeli army.

304. (H) 6 Mar. **M. Sharett to Y. Barnea**
The need for maintaining the position of military attaché at Israel's legation in Moscow.

305. (H) 8 Mar. **M. Sharett to M. Namir**
Circumstances of Sharett's failure to meet Vyshinskii; discussion of Jewish underground poem and plans for its publication in the West; Sharett's plans to visit Moscow.

306. (R) 10 Mar. **Excerpts from the Political Report of the USSR Legation in Israel**
Negative trends in Israel's policy towards the USSR: 'opera' incident of 21 August; anti-Soviet propaganda in the Israeli press; delays in transfer of Russian property.

307. (R) 22 Mar. **V.A. Zorin to M.A. Suslov**
Dispatch of memorandum about Zionism.

308. (R) 1 Apr. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Sneh's report on Sharett's reaction to an article hostile to Israel published in the USSR.

309. (H) 3 Apr. **M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Suggestions for counteracting hostile publications in the USSR.

310. (R) 19 Apr. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett**
Anti-Israeli article in *Literaturnaia* gazeta; US loan and Israeli independence; Israeli note on conscription of Soviet citizens into the Israeli army.

311. (H) 19 Apr. **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Legation in the USSR**
Sharett's rebuttal of the anti-Israeli article in *Literaturnaia* gazeta.

312. (R) 19 Apr. **Meeting: A.D. Shchiborin – M. Namir**
Israeli criticism of Arab League collective security pact; request for copies of ancient Hebrew manuscripts located in the USSR; invitation to Soviet afforestation expert.

313. (R) 19 Apr. **A.Ia. Vyshinskii to P.I. Ershov**
Reversal of Soviet position on Jerusalem.

314. (R) 19 Apr. **USSR Legation in Israel to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Anti-Soviet position of ruling circles in Israel.

315. (H) 20 Apr. **M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Conversation with Shchiborin: Arab League collective security pact; Israel in the Soviet press.

316. (E) 20 Apr. **Meeting: A. Eban – Ia. Malik**
Reversal of Soviet position on Jerusalem; Arab–Israeli relations; Israeli memorandum to the UN Conciliation Commission; Arab rearmament; Israeli relations with Turkey and India.

317. (R) 22 Apr. **A. Lavrent'ev to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Israel's expressions of gratitude for the reversal of Soviet policy on Jerusalem.

318. (R) 25 Apr. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Request for instructions regarding policy towards the Mapai-sponsored Committee for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

319. (R) 27 Apr. **A.Ia. Vyshinskii to P.I. Ershov**
Instructions to Ershov to avoid functions of the Committee for Friendly Relations.

320. (R) 24 May **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Israel's attempts to buy arms in Czechoslovakia.

321. (H) 12 June **A. Eban to M. Sharett**
Eban's meeting with Malik: Israel and the Tripartite Declaration; the Jerusalem question; Trygve Lie's peace initiative.

322. (H) 19 June **Y. Rabinovich to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Bishop Vladimir and legation First Secretary Rozhkov depart to Moscow for consultations regarding Russian property in Israel; Soviet cultural activities in Israel.

323. (R) 19 June **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Meeting with Sharett: Sharett's intention to visit Moscow.

324. (R) 22 June **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Ceremony unveiling monument to the Red Army.

325. (H) 6 July **M. Namir to M. Sharett**
Meeting with Shchiborin: Israeli government statement on Korea.

326. (H) 17–21 July **Excerpts from Conference of Israeli Diplomatic Representatives Abroad**
Situation of Soviet Jewry; Israel's international orientation.

327. (R) 18 July **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Threats received by the Soviet legation.

328. (H) 31 Aug. **G. Rafael to M. Sharett**
Eban's meeting with Malik: demographic and economic changes in Israel; British and American interests in the Middle

East; Islam and the Vatican; Arab refugees; international relations.

329. (H) 1 Sept. **Excerpts from a Letter of the East European Division of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Israeli Legations in Eastern Europe**
Encouraging signs regarding the emigration of relatives from the USSR.

330. (H) 5 Sept. **M. Namir to M. Sharett**
The Jewish community in Odessa.

331. (R) 7 Sept. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Riftin's report on the meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee: position to be taken by the Israeli delegation at the forthcoming UN General Assembly session; emigration of Soviet Jews; campaign against cosmopolitanism.

332. (R) 23 Sept. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – W. Eytan**
Position of Israeli delegation regarding issues on the agenda of the UN; Israeli opposition to granting special status to the Arab League in the UN.

333. (H) 27 Sept. **M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Meeting with Bazarov: Israel's opposition to granting special status to the Arab League in the UN.

334. (H) 5 Oct. **W. Eytan to M. Namir**
Recalling of Namir and nomination of Shazar as minister in Moscow.

335. (H) 13 Oct. **A. Levavi to M. Namir**
Soviet note on Russian property in Israel.

336. (H) 20 Oct. **Meeting: A. Levavi – V. Rozhkov**
Property of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission; the Jerusalem question and its impact on Russian property there.

337. (R) 24 Oct. **Meeting: A.A. Gromyko – M. Namir**
Namir's request to visit his mother in Kherson.

338. (H) 30 Oct. **M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Farewell meeting with Gromyko; favourable report in the Soviet press on relations with the Arab states; Namir's visit to a kolkhoz.

339. (H) 3 Nov. **A. Levavi to M. Namir**
Sharett's conversation with Vyshinskii and the latter's negative remarks regarding Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel.

340. (R) 9 Nov. **A.A. Gromyko to P.I. Ershov**
Instructions to emphasize in conversations with Israeli leaders that there is no link between the Soviet position at the UN on Jerusalem and the issue of Russian property there.

341. (H) 13 Nov. **M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Meeting with Zorin: the international situation; delay in granting *agrément* to Shazar.

342. (H) 21 Nov. **Meeting: Sh. Eliashiv – Ia. Malik**
Swedish–Dutch proposal on Jerusalem; immigration to Israel; Soviet–US relations.

343. (H) 30 Dec. **Z. Argaman to A. Levavi**
Moscow rabbi's avoidance of Israeli diplomats.

1951

344. (R) 2 Jan. **Meeting: A.P. Vlasov – Z. Argaman**
Establishing procedures for former Soviet citizens to obtain legal documentation from the USSR.

345. (H) 8 Jan. **Z. Argaman to A. Levavi**
Suggest broader contacts between the Israeli legation and the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs; trade relations with the USSR.

346. (R) 14 Jan. **Meeting: M.L. Mukhin – M. Sharett**
Russian property in Israel; Soviet refusal to accept Shazar as minister to Moscow.

Editorial Note
Notes from the government of Israel to the governments of the four occupation powers in Germany.

347. (H) 2 Feb. **Attorney-General of Israel to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Russian property in Israel.

348. (R) 16 Feb. **Z. Argaman to A. Levavi**
The Israeli legation and Soviet Jewry. Non-existent relations between the Israeli legation in Moscow and local Jews.

349. (R) 27 Feb. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Celebrations in Israel of the 33rd anniversary of the Soviet army.

350. (R) 5 Mar. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Riftin's report on a session of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee: General Robertson's visit to Israel.

351. (H) 7 Mar. **G. Rafael to A. Eban**
Meeting with Malik: the proposed peace settlement for Korea; Israel's position on German rearmament; Malik on US policy of confrontation.

352. (R) 28 Mar. **Excerpt from the Political Report for 1950 of the USSR Legation in Israel**
Impact of immigration on Israel's position in the Middle East; proposal to increase USSR legation staff.

353. (R) 3 Apr. **V.A. Zorin to P.I. Ershov**
Rejection of Ershov's proposal to protest Israeli anti-Soviet publications; recommends rebuttal in the Soviet press.

354. (H) 4 Apr. **Z. Argaman to A. Levavi**
Trade relations with the USSR.

355. (R) 11 Apr. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Report from a Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee meeting: border clashes with Syria.

356. (H) 29 Apr. **Z. Argaman to A. Levavi**
Visit to the Jewish community in Tbilisi.

357. (R) 30 Apr. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Recommendation not to send congratulatory telegram for Israel's independence day.

358. (R) 8 May **Memorandum on Soviet–Israeli Talks on the Transfer of Russian Property in Israel to the Soviet Union**
Soviet resolution of 31 May on Russian property in Israel; review of Soviet–Israeli contacts on the property question.

359. (H) 18 May **Z. Argaman to W. Eytan**
Report of a meeting with Shchiborin concerning the Security Council debate on the Hula drainage project.

360. (H) 20 May **D. Tesler to the Israeli Legation in the USSR**
Discussion with Soviet legation officials on consular procedures in Israel.

361. (H) 21 May **Levavi to the Israeli Legations in Eastern Europe**
Conversation between Sharett and Ershov; incidents on the Syrian border; anti-Israel article in *Izvestiia;* refusal of Soviet representatives to accept an invitation to attend a Passover service.

362. (H) 23 May **Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Israeli Legation in the USSR**
Soviet position on Israel's Hula drainage project; Israeli–Syrian border incident.

363. (R) 25 May **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett**
Sharett requests Vyshinskii's mediation in normalization of Israeli–Romanian relations; appeals for release of arrested Zionist activists; unfavourable publications in Soviet and Israeli press.

364. (R) 2 June **Meeting: P.I. Ershov and M.P. Kalugin – M. Sharett**
Sharett informs Ershov that recommendations regarding Russian property in Israel have been submitted to the government.

365. (R) 14 June **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sneh**
Israeli–American friendship agreement; Ben-Gurion's trip to the US; developments within the Israeli left.

366. (R) 11 July **A.I. Lavrent'ev to P.I. Ershov**
Visit of the Syrian chargé d'affaires to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Syrian initiative to settle conflict with Israel.

367. (H) 12 July **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Impressions of Moscow; meetings with Jews; police surveillance of the legation.

368. (R) 13 July **P.I. Ershov and M.P. Kalugin to A.A. Gromyko**
Suggestion to draft a note to Ben-Gurion protesting Israel's delay in transferring property to the Soviet government.

369. (H) 16 July **A. Eban to M. Sharett**
Meeting with Malik: Suez Canal blockade; border incidents; Korean peace initiative.

370. (R) 17 July **Meeting: A.A. Gromyko – Sh. Eliashiv**
Suez blockade; emigration of Soviet citizens with relatives in Israel.

371. (H) 17 July **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Transcript of conversation with Gromyko: Suez Canal blockade; emigration of relatives.

372. (R) 19 July **A.I. Lavrent'ev to P.I. Ershov**
Instructions to visit Sharett and urge transfer of Russian property in Israel.

373. (R) 23 July **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett**
Sharett explains delay in government treatment of Russian property issue.

374. (H) 27 July **Memorandum by A. Levavi**
Analysis of Soviet policy in the Middle East.

375. (R) 13 Aug. **Excerpt from the Political Report of the USSR Legation in Israel**
Israel's anti-Soviet policy.

376. (R) 25 Aug. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Sneh's report on Ben-Gurion's negotiations with Mapam to form a coalition government; Ben-Gurion on conditions for friendly relations with the USSR; Mapam leader Yaari on negotiations with Ben-Gurion.

377. (R) 31 Aug. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett**
Sharett's critical assessment of Soviet position regarding the Suez blockade; requests USSR to support Four-Power draft resolution.

378. (R) 3 Sept. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – Sh. Eliashiv**
Anti-Soviet position of the Israeli press; endorsement of Israeli immigration certificates by Soviet consular officials; emigration of Soviet citizens with relatives in Israel.

379. (R) 3 Sept. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sneh**
Sneh's report on Mapam's negotiations with Mapai over forming a coalition government; Mapam's position on domestic policies.

380. (R) 13 Sept. **Meeting: A.Ia. Vyshinskii – Sh. Eliashiv**
Vyshinskii suggests that Eliashiv submit a memorandum on 'reunification of families' living in the USSR and Israel.

381. (H) 13 Sept. **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Eliashiv's transcript of a conversation with Vyshinskii; notes that Vyshinskii addressed him as the 'representative of the Jews' and not only of Israel.

382. (H) 4 Oct. **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Meetings with Jews in the Moscow synagogue.

383. (H) 21 Oct. **Sh. Eliashiv to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Problem of 'divided families' as a result of WWII and the Holocaust; emphasizes need to permit emigration of relatives in order to accomplish reunification of families.

384. (R) 26 Oct. **Meeting: S.T. Bazarov – Sh. Eliashiv**
Israel's request to support Robinson as a candidate for chairman of the UN Judicial Committee.

385. (R) 27 Oct. **M.G. Gribanov and S.T. Bazarov to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Recommendation to ignore Israeli note demanding reparations from Germany.

Editorial Note
Vyshinskii's unfinished draft memorandum on Jewish emigration.

386. (R) 15 Nov. **A.A. Gromyko to P.I. Ershov**
Quarterly report of the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv: criticism of its inadequacy and adoption of some of its recommendations.

387. (R) 21 Nov. **Note from the Government of USSR to the Government of Israel**
Soviet objections to Israeli participation in the Middle East Command.

388. (R) 21 Nov. **Reception by A.A. Gromyko of Diplomatic Representatives of Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon and Syria**
Delivery of Soviet note on a Middle East Command; Eliashiv's comments.

389. (E) 8 Dec. ***Note Verbale* from the Government of Israel to the Government of the USSR**
Israel's position on a Middle East Command; emigration of Soviet citizens with relatives in Israel.

390. (R) 8 Dec. **Meeting: V.A. Zorin – Sh. Eliashiv**
Delivery of Israeli note on a Middle East Command.

391. (H) 9 Dec. **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Eliashiv's transcript of conversation with Zorin; Soviet press report on foreign bases in Israel.

392. (R) 16 Dec. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Report of Sharett's conversation with Acheson: reasons for Israel's hesitation to join the Middle East Command; emigration from the USSR; request for US grant-in-aid; reparations from Germany.

393. (R) 21 Dec. **Meeting: A.D. Shchiborin – Z. Argaman**
Invitation of Soviet scientists to a conference in Israel.

394. (R) 22 Dec. **Meeting: A.Ia. Vyshinskii – M. Sharett**
Emigration to Israel; Israel's support of American proposals at the UN.

1952

395. (R) 1 Jan. **Report on VOKS Activities in Israel**
Report on activities of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR, 1951.

396. (H) 2 Jan. **Sh. Kaddar to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Meeting with Soviet diplomats in Brussels: immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel.

397. (H) 6 Jan. **Meeting: M. Sharett – A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Sharett expresses desire to meet Stalin to discuss emigration; Vyshinskii on lack of reciprocity in Israeli policy *vis-à-vis* the USSR; emigration as contradicting the essence of the Soviet state system.

398. (H) 29 Jan. **G. Rafael to the Head of the Israeli Delegation to the United Nations**
Meeting with Soviet ambassador to Poland Sobolev: antisemitism in Poland; the situation of Soviet Jews.

399. (H) 1 Feb. **Sh. Eliashiv to M. Sharett**
Eliashiv's reservations on Sharett's approach in the conversation with Vyshinskii; Israel's shift away from a policy of non-alignment at the UN.

400. (R) 23 Feb. **A.A. Gromyko to I.V. Stalin**
Israeli government statement of 8 December 1951 regarding emigration of Soviet Jews; surveys applications for emigration permits.

401. (R) 24 Feb. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett**
Ershov's official statement on Russian property in Israel; possibility of turning the issue over to the courts.

402. (R) 24 Feb. **Statement by P.I. Ershov on Russian Property in Israel**
Delay of the Israeli authorities in handling the issue of Russian property; request to transfer the property and income derived from it.

403. (H) 25 Feb. **A. Levavi to M. Sharett**
Assessment of Sharett's talk with Vyshinskii. Disagreement over Namir's views regarding attitudes of Soviet Jews toward Israel.

404. (R) 8 Mar. **A.A. Gromyko to I.V. Stalin**
Instructions to Ershov to visit Sharett and give Soviet response to Israeli note of 8 December 1951 on the Middle East Command; Foreign Ministry memorandum on Israeli request for Jewish emigration to be submitted.

405. (R) 21 Mar. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Reaction to Ben-Gurion's statement on plight of Soviet Jews.

406. (H) 25 Mar. **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Israeli claims for reparations from Germany.

407. (R) 6 Apr. **B.F. Podtserob to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Memorandum addressed to Molotov on emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel; recommendation to grant six Soviet citizens permission to emigrate.

408. (R) 19 Apr. **V.A. Zorin to P.I. Ershov**
Instructs Ershov to urge Sharett to hasten the transfer of Russian property in Israel.

409. (R) 24 Apr. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Sharett states that a decision on Russian property will be made on 27 April; asks that the Soviet government influence East Germany to take a positive approach to Israeli demands for reparations.

410. (H) 27 Apr. **A. Levavi to Z. Argaman**
Report on Sharett – Ershov conversation: Russian property in Israel; Israeli demand for reparations from Germany.

411. (R) 29 Apr. **Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett**
Sharett conveys Israeli note on Russian property in Israel. Ershov's comment on the Israeli position; text of the note.

412. (R) 10 May **USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Israeli Legation in Moscow**
Soviet decision not to participate in the international conference on desert research.

413. (R) 12 May **Excerpt from the Political Report of the USSR Legation in Israel**
Concludes that in 1951 Israel lost its independence in domestic and foreign policy to the US; hostile attitude towards USSR; recommends: refraining from giving Israel political support in the UN; stopping emigration of Jews from Eastern Europe; increasing the size of the Soviet legation in Israel.

414. (R) 13 June **A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Eliashiv's report to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee on his visit to Moscow.

415. (R) 27 June **A.Ia. Vyshinskii to the USSR Minister in Israel**
Transfer of the seat of Israeli government from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem; Syrian and Lebanese Foreign Ministries appeal to USSR to refrain from moving its legation to Jerusalem.

416. (R) 10 July **A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Arguments against moving the Soviet legation to Jerusalem.

417. (R) 11 July **A.Ia. Vyshinskii to V.A. Kholodkov**
USSR support for recognition of the emblem of the Red Shield of David Society and its admission to the International Federation of Red Cross Societies.

418. (R) 28 July **A.N. Abramov and M. Popov to G.M. Pushkin**
Dissemination of Soviet books in Israel.

419. (H) 12 Aug. **A. Levavi to Sh. Eliashiv**
Draft note to USSR regarding reparations from East Germany; the halting of emigration from Eastern Europe; commercial and cultural ties with Moscow.

420. (R) 13 Aug. **A.Ia. Vyshinskii to the USSR Minister in Israel**
Urgent request for a report on efforts to set up a Middle East defence organization.

421. (R) 16 Aug. **A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Israel position on the creation of a Middle East defence organization; Sneh on Israeli government option to participate in the Middle East Command together with Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia.

422. (R) 20 Aug. **A.I. Denisov to M.A. Suslov**
Dispatch of a congratulatory telegram on the 10th anniversary of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR; VOKS' rejection of Sneh's proposal to exchange cultural delegations.

423. (R) 20 Aug. **A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Ben-Gurion's views on the Middle East Command; Israeli shipping rights in the Suez Canal; emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel.

424. (R) 21 Aug. **A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Sneh's report on the statement by Sharett at the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee regarding Israel's global orientation.

425. (H) 3 Sept. **G. Rafael to M. Sharett**
Meeting with Malik: the USSR and the Palestine problem; transfer of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Jerusalem; Ben-Gurion's address to Naguib; the Suez Canal; a Middle East pact; global issues.

426. (H) 4 Sept. **Meeting: Sh. Eliashiv – G.M. Pushkin**
Israel's demand for German reparations; British and French legations in Israel raised to the level of embassies.

427. (R) 15 Sept. **Note of the Israeli Legation in the USSR to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Israel's demand for reparations from Germany; appeal to the Soviet government to influence the GDR in this regard.

428. (H) 18 Sept. **M. Kehat to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Visit of the Israeli volleyball team to Moscow.

429. (R) 8 Oct. **Meeting: B.F. Podtserob – Sh. Eliashiv**
Session of the UN General Assembly.

430. (R) 19 Oct. **A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Recommendation to delay return of the Soviet minister from his home leave as a protest against deteriorating relations with Israel.

431. (H) 28 Oct. **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Eban and Eliashiv's meeting with Zorin at the UN General Assembly: British and American efforts to put the Palestine question on the agenda of the Ad Hoc Committee.

432. (R) 9 Nov. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Celebration of the 35th anniversary of the October Revolution.

433. (R) 9 Nov. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Reception in honour of the 35th anniversary of the October Revolution.

434. (R) 10 Nov. **Ia. Malik to I.V. Stalin**
Condolences on the death of President Weizmann.

435. (R) 19 Nov. **M. Popov to N.N. Chigar'kov**
Opening in Tel Aviv of a club sponsored by the League for Friendship with the USSR.

436. (R) 8 Dec. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Protests in Israel against the Slansky trial.

437. (H) 10 Dec. **East European Division of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Israeli Legation in Moscow**
Official Israeli condemnation of the attempt to set fire to a Soviet legation car in Tel Aviv.

438. (H) 23 Dec. **W. Eytan to Israeli Missions Abroad**
Codes of conduct in encounters with representatives of East European countries and the USSR.

439. (R) 23 Dec. **G.M. Pushkin to P.I. Ershov**
Difficulties in exporting Soviet books to Israel.

1953

440. (H) 5 Jan. **A. Eban to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Division among American Jewish leaders with regard to the Slansky trial; Eban's suggestion to denounce the trial without passing judgement on the USSR.

441. (H) 13 Jan. **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Soviet announcement of the Doctors' Plot.

442. (H) 14 Jan. **W. Eytan to Israeli Missions Abroad**
Suggestions for an initial cautious reaction to the Doctors' Plot; attempts to avoid public confrontation with the USSR.

443. (R) 15 Jan. **S. Bazarov to P.I. Ershov**
Objections to the Israeli assertion that certain issues regarding Russian property in Israel should be decided by the courts.

Editorial Note
Israeli government statement on the accusations against Jewish physicians in the Soviet Union.

444. (H) 20 Jan. **D. Ben-Gurion to the Members of the Israeli Government**
With regard to the Doctors' Plot, Ben-Gurion calls for conducting ideological warfare against the USSR and taking legal action against the Israeli Communist Party for its support of a Soviet blood libel.

445. (H) 22 Jan. **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Account of the Doctors' Plot.

446. (R) 24 Jan. **S.T. Bazarov and A. Shchiborin to A.Ia. Vyshinskii**
Western Press reaction to the Doctors' Plot; speculation on breach of relations with Israel; preparation of material on Zionist anti-Soviet activity.

447. (H) 28 Jan. **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Objections to the tone of Israeli reactions to the Doctors' Plot.

448. (H) 29 Jan. **A. Levavi to W. Eytan**
Israel's international orientation in the wake of the shift in Soviet policy.

449. (R) 31 Jan. **Excerpt from the Political Report of the USSR Legation in Israel**
Arab hostility to Israel; Israeli public's reaction to the Doctors' Plot and the Slansky trial; analysis of anti-Soviet trends.

450. (R) [Jan.] **Report on VOKS Activities in Israel**
Extremely difficult conditions for operation of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

451. (H) 2 Feb. **M. Sharett to the Israeli Embassy in Washington**
Instructions for treatment of the Doctors' Plot; need for cooperation with American Jewry.

452. (R) 9 Feb. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Bombing on the grounds of the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv; suggests severing diplomatic relations with Israel.

453. (H) 10 Feb. **Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the USSR Legation in Israel**
Apologies for the incident on the premises of the legation.

454. (H) 10 Feb. **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Recurring themes in Soviet press publications on the Doctors' Plot.

455. (R) 10 Feb. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Statement by Ben-Gurion in the Knesset following the bombing at the USSR legation.

456. (R) 10 Feb. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Expression of regret by the president of Israel following the incident at the USSR legation.

457. (R) 12 Feb. **Meeting: A.Ia. Vyshinskii – Sh. Eliashiv**
Transmission of Soviet note on severance of diplomatic relations with Israel; argues that the terrorist act resulted from an anti-communist campaign.

458. (R) 12 Feb. **Note from the USSR Government to the Israeli Legation in Moscow**
Note on severance of diplomatic relations with Israel.

459. (H) 12 Feb. **Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Israeli Missions Abroad**
Analysis of Soviet motives for severing relations with Israel.

460. (R) 13 Feb. **P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Press and public reaction to the severance of Soviet–Israeli relations.

461. (R) 15 Feb. **Ia.A. Malik to G.M. Malenkov**
Arrangements regarding representation of Soviet interests in Israel by Bulgaria following the severance of diplomatic relations.

462. (R) 16 Feb. **Ia.A. Malik to I.V. Stalin**
Recommendation to East European countries to refrain from issuing a statement breaking diplomatic relations with Israel or linking the severance of Soviet–Israeli relations with those of Israel.

463. (R) 21 Feb. **Ia.A. Malik to G.M. Malenkov**
Departure of Israeli and Soviet diplomats to their respective countries.

464. (H) 6 Mar. **Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Israeli Missions in Eastern Europe**
Instructions on protocol following Stalin's death.

465. (F) 9 Mar. **Israeli Legation in the Netherlands to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands**
Request that the Dutch government offer condolences on behalf of Israel to the government of the USSR on Stalin's death.

466. (H) 4 Apr. **Press Release by the Spokesman of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Satisfaction at Soviet retraction of accusations against the Jewish doctors; Israeli readiness to resume diplomatic relations.

467. (H) 10 Apr. **B. Razin to Sh. Bentsur**
Friendly meeting in Sofia with the Soviet ambassador to Bulgaria.

468. (H) 14 Apr. **B. Razin to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Soviet feelers to renew relations with Israel.

469. (H) 25 Apr. **Israeli UN Delegation to W. Eytan and M. Sharett**
Verbal clashes between Israeli and Soviet delegations at the UN.

470. (R) 8 May **Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the USSR Embassy in Sofia**
Inquires into the possibility of concluding of a trade treaty between Israel and the USSR in spite of the severance of diplomatic relations.

471. (H) 14 May **G. Avner and B. Razin to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Moves towards renewing diplomatic relations between Israel and the USSR.

472. (R) 18 May **P.I. Gerasimov to G.M. Pushkin**
Israel's attempt to resume diplomatic relations with the USSR.

473. (H) 28 May **G. Avner and B. Razin to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Meeting with Soviet Ambassador in Sofia, Bodrov.

Editorial Note
Note Verbale from the government of the USSR to the government of Israel.

474. (E) 5 June **W. Eytan to the Israeli Legation in Sofia**
Note Verbale from the government of Israel to the government of the USSR.

475. (H) 6 June **G. Avner to A. Levavi**
Comments on the *Note Verbale:* reassessment of Israel's relations with the Eastern bloc.

476. (H) 23 June **A. Levavi to G. Avner**
Response to Avner's proposals regarding Israel's relations with the Eastern bloc.

477. (H) 1 July **G. Avner to A. Levavi**
Negotiations with the USSR about resumption of diplomatic relations and suggestions for steps to improve relations.

478. (E) 6 July **M. Sharett to V.M. Molotov**
Official proposal to resume diplomatic relations.

479. (E) 15 July **V.M. Molotov to M. Sharett**
Resumption of diplomatic relations.

480. (R) 28 July **G.T. Zaitsev to V.A. Zorin**
Recommends opening Soviet legation in Tel Aviv and monitoring position of other major powers on the issue of moving to Jerusalem.

481. (R) 29 July **Meeting: M.I. Ivliev – B. Razin**
Agrément to Eliashiv as Israel's minister to Moscow.

482. (R) 4 Aug. **Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet**
Appointment of A.N. Abramov as minister in Israel.

483. (H) 17 Aug. **W. Eytan to A. Eban**
Instructions to urge the Soviet delegation at the UN to open the USSR's legation in Jerusalem.

484. (H) 2 Sept. **Resumé of Consultations at the Residence of the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs**
Renewal of trials of Prisoners of Zion in the USSR; prospects for improving economic ties with the Eastern bloc.

485. (R) 2 Sept. **G.T. Zaitsev and A.N. Abramov to V.A. Zorin**
Opposition of Soviet Foreign Ministry to request of Academy of Sciences to close the office of the Russian Palestine Society in Israel.

486. (R) 2 Sept. **Meeting: M.F. Bodrov – B. Razin**
Premises for the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv.

487. (R) 5 Sept. **V.A. Zorin to A.V. Topchiev**
Recommendation of Ministry of Foreign Affairs to continue the activities of the Russian Palestine Society in Israel.

488. (R) 13 Oct. **Memorandum on Soviet–Israeli Trade**
Israeli–Soviet trade turnover, 1950–52.

489. (H) 23 Nov. **Z. Argaman to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Desire of USSR Ministry of Foreign Trade to expand commercial activity between Israel and the USSR.

490. (R) 1 Dec. **Meeting: V.M. Molotov – Sh. Eliashiv**
Presentation of credentials and discussion of Israeli–Soviet relations.

491. (R) 2 Dec. **Meeting: A.N. Abramov – M. Sharett**
Sharett's reaction to the text of Abramov's speech for the forthcoming presentation of credentials; intention of the Soviet legation to publish a bulletin.

492. (H) 3 Dec. **M. Sharett to Sh. Eliashiv**
Sharett's transcript of meeting with Abramov in Israel.

493. (R) 12 Dec. **D.A. Zhukov to L.A. Shcherbakov**
Text of Voroshilov's speech to be made at the presentation of Eliashiv's credentials.

494. (H) 14 Dec. **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Speeches at the presentation of credentials of the Israeli minister in Moscow.

495. (R) 19 Dec. **A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Relations between Israel's two rival leagues for friendship with the USSR.

496. (H) 21 Dec. **Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
Meeting with Gromyko: Gromyko's negative approach to the question of Jewish emigration; the Security Council debate on the Jordan River dispute; the Qibya incident.

497. (R) 22 Dec. **Meeting: A.A. Gromyko – Sh. Eliashiv**
Gromyko's transcript of conversation with Eliashiv.

498. (H) 30 Dec. **Report by Sh. Eliashiv**
The situation of Soviet Jewry during and after the Doctors' Plot; visit to the synagogue; Soviet coverage of Israeli politics.

DOCUMENTS

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

1
Meeting of the Jewish Agency Executive (London, 30 January 1941)

MINUTES: WA
Secret

Present: Dr. Weizmann, Mrs. Dugdale, Professor Namier, Mr. Locker, Mr. Linton.

[...][1]

Interviews: Dr. Weizmann said he had[...] a very interesting talk with Maiskii, the Russian ambassador. The object of his visit had been to discuss the suggestion that the Russian government should purchase oranges in Palestine and pay with furs in New York.[2] Maiskii said that he was no businessman, but the proposition sounded reasonable to him, and he would communicate it to his government, and put in a good word in support of it. Dr. Weizmann pointed out that such a barter arrangement would be of advantage to both parties. Palestinian oranges should long ago have found a natural market in Russia, and trade contacts of this kind would prove most valuable in the future. Maiskii had then asked him how the war was affecting Palestine, and he had given him some idea of what the economic situation there was.

The discussion had then turned to political questions.[2] He had told Maiskii that the Arab–Jewish question had become frozen; there was at present some semblance of cooperation between the two peoples, but of course there might be another flare-up. They had then discussed possible solutions after the war (here it was interesting to note that Maiskii indirectly assumed a British victory). Maiskii said that a great Jewish problem would face them after the war, to which Dr. Weizmann had replied that Jewry, apart from Palestine, the British Empire, America, and to some extent (and in a rather different sense) Russia, was being destroyed. Maiskii asked whether it was Dr. Weizmann's opinion that the only solution lay in Palestine. On his replying in the affirmative, Maiskii said there would have to be an exchange of populations. Dr. Weizmann said that if half a million Arabs could be transferred, two million

---

1. Sections of the report extraneous to this volume have been omitted.
2. In the course of 1939–40, the territories of Eastern Poland, Bessarabia, Northern Bukovina and the Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia) were incorporated into the USSR. Concerned with the plight of the huge masses of the Jewish population there, the leading institutions of the Jewish community in Palestine established in August–September 1940 the Committee for Russian Jewish Affairs as an adjunct to the Jewish Agency for Palestine. The committee recommended contacting Soviet diplomatic representatives in Europe and the United States with the purpose of sending a delegation to the USSR to negotiate with the Soviet government (Meeting of Magen Secretariat, 20 September 1940, CZA J89/26). The first meeting of the Zionist representatives, Dr. Nahum Goldmann and Rabbi Stephen Wise, with Soviet ambassador to the US Konstantin Umanskii, took place in Washington in October 1940 and dealt, *inter alia*, with a Zionist mission to Moscow (N. Goldmann to the Jewish Agency [Jerusalem], 28 October 1940, CZA S25/487).

Jews could be put in their place. That, of course, would be a first instalment; what might happen afterwards was a matter for history. Maiskii's comment was that they in Russia had also had to deal with exchanges of populations. Dr. Weizmann said that the distances they had to deal with in Palestine would be smaller: they would be transferring the Arabs only into Iraq or Transjordan. Maiskii asked whether some difficulties might not arise in transferring a hill-country population to the plains, and Dr. Weizmann replied that a beginning might be made with the Arabs from the Jordan Valley; but anyhow conditions in Transjordan were not so very different from those of the Palestine hill-country.

He had then explained to Maiskii their efforts at cooperative settlement. Maiskii said that the Jews in Russia had proved themselves to be very good agriculturists.[3] He was interested in the communal settlements, and asked what success had attended their efforts to get them firmly rooted. Dr. Weizmann replied that the settlements had proved very successful provided they were not too large; the maximum number of settlers seemed to be between 800 and 1,000. If they grew beyond that there seemed to be a tendency to absorb too many people who could not pull their weight. Maiskii said that their experience in Russia had been much the same. The huge collectives had broken down, and experience showed a group of about 800 members to be the best. Dr. Weizmann had then explained to Maiskii that the land of the settlements had been 'nationalized' and that the settlers repaid their obligations over a period of three years.[4] The Palestinian Administration called them 'communists' because of their communal settlements, and the Russian government regarded them as 'counter-revolutionaries', but in fact they were just Zionists. Maiskii seemed to enjoy this description. He then returned to the question of the Arabs, and Dr. Weizmann explained that they were unable to deal with them as, for instance, the Russian authorities would deal with a backward element in their population in the USSR. Nor would they desire to do so. When Maiskii referred to the Arabs as 'sons of the desert' he told him that Major Jarvis, who had had great experience of them in Sinai, had called them in his book 'fathers of the desert', and Maiskii had appreciated the allusions. At the end of the talk, Maiskii had said that he had learnt a great deal about Palestine and the Jewish problem. He would telegraph to his government about the oranges and would let Dr. Weizmann know as soon as he received a reply.[5]

---

3. As of the mid-1920s the Soviet authorities adopted a policy of encouraging Jews to move to agricultural settlements. Jewish rural settlements were concentrated mainly in three *oblasti* of Ukraine, the Crimea and Birobidzhan. (see Doc. 3, n. 7).
4. Meaning of the original is unclear. Most of the collective agricultural settlements in Palestine were established on Jewish National Fund lands, which were leased to the settlers, usually for a period of 49 years.
5. Within less than two weeks Maiskii informed Weizmann that he had referred his suggestion to his superiors and that they had replied that such a deal was of no interest to the Soviet government (see Maiskii to Weizmann, 10 February 1941, CZA, Z4/14920. See also Doc. 2).

Mr. Maiskii had then mentioned the subject of the *yeshiva* students in Vilna.[6] He said the Russian government was prepared to give them exit permits for Palestine. Dr. Weizmann said they would be glad to have them in Palestine, but the difficulty was to obtain certificates for them.[7]

[...]

2
Meeting: I.M. Maiskii – Ch. Weizmann (London, 3 February 1941)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.017A, OP.1, P.2, D.8, LL.17–19

A few days ago I had an unexpected visitor: the well-known Zionist leader Dr. Weizmann. He is a tall, elderly, elegantly dressed gentleman with a pale yellow tinge to his skin and a large bald patch on his head. His face is very wrinkled and marked with some dark patches. His nose is aquiline and his speech calm and slow. He speaks excellent Russian, although he left Russia forty-five years ago.

Weizmann came to discuss the following matter: at present Palestine has no market for her oranges – would the USSR take them in exchange for furs? It would be easy to sell the furs through Jewish firms in America.

I answered Weizmann by saying that off hand[1] I could not say anything definite, but I promised to make enquiries. However, as a preliminary reply, I

Doc. 1

6. After the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, thousands of Polish Jews, among them many students and staff of theological academies (*yeshivot*) fled to Lithuania and arrived in Vilna and its environs. Their Polish citizenship was revoked, and they could not attain Lithuanian nationality (only those who had resided in Vilna for over twenty years were recognized as Lithuanian citizens). Some of these refugees strove to emigrate and they turned for aid to various agencies abroad. In particular, deans of theological academies applied to the chief rabbi of Palestine, Isaac Halevi Herzog. Herzog visited London and had a meeting with Ambassador Maiskii in February 1940. He asked that transit visas be issued to these students and their rabbis. On 28 August 1940 Maiskii sent the following telegram to Herzog: 'After making inquiries in Moscow, I find that Soviet government has no objection to allowing transit via Odessa for theological student refugees at Vilna, provided their passports are endorsed with Palestinian entry visa and Turkish transit visa' (Goldman, 'Rabbi Herzog's First Rescue Journey', pp. 7–8).
7. On 7 May 1939, the British government issued a White Paper which stipulated that Jewish immigration to Palestine would be limited to 75,000 for the next five years, and then would be stopped altogether. With the invasion of Poland by Germany in 1939, the British government prohibited Jewish immigration from German-occupied Poland. In the aftermath of the Soviet annexation of the Baltic states in 1940, the Colonial Office, the Foreign Office and the high commissioner for Palestine discussed the extension of this ban to Soviet-occupied territories. This prohibition was considered necessary by British officials, since the Soviet authorities did not allow British consular staff to screen potential applicants. In the telegram from the under-secretary of state, Colonial Office, to the high commissioner for Palestine, dated 1 August 1940, the decision regarding a general prohibition on immigration from Soviet-occupied territories was endorsed, while cautioning that the decision should not be made public (PRO, FO 371/25243, printed in *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 3 [1973], No. 2, pp. 73–4).

Doc. 2

1. 'Off hand' – in English in the original.

said that the Palestinian Jews should not place any great hopes on us, since we did not as a rule import fruit from abroad. This proved to be the case: Moscow turned down Weizmann's proposal, and I sent him a letter to that effect today.

In the course of the conversation about oranges, Weizmann talked about Palestinian affairs in general. Furthermore, he spoke about the present situation and prospects of world Jewry. Weizmann takes a very pessimistic view. According to his calculations there are about 17 million Jews in the world today. Of these, 10–11 million live in comparatively tolerable conditions: at least they are not threatened with physical extermination. These are the Jews who live in the US, the British Empire and the USSR. Weizmann spoke about Soviet Jews in particular: 'I'm not worried about them. They are not under any threat. In twenty or thirty years, if the present regime in your country lasts, they will be assimilated.'

'What do you mean, assimilated?', I retorted. 'Surely you know that the Jews in the USSR enjoy all the rights of a national minority, like the Armenians, Georgians, Ukrainians and so on?'

'Of course I know that', Weizmann answered, 'but when I say "assimilated", all I mean is that Soviet Jews will gradually merge with the general current of Russian life, as an inalienable part of it. I may not like this, but I'm ready to accept it: at least Soviet Jews are on firm ground, and their fate does not make me shudder. But I cannot think without horror about the fate of the 6–7 million Jews who live in central or south-eastern Europe – in Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, the Balkans and especially Poland. What's going to happen to them? Where will they go?'

Weizmann sighed deeply and continued:

'If Germany wins the war they will all simply perish. However, I don't believe that the Germans will win. But even if Britain wins the war, what will happen then?'

Here he began to [narrate] his fears. The British – and especially their colonial administrators – don't like Jews. This is particularly noticeable in Palestine, which is inhabited by both Jews and Arabs. Here the British 'high commissioners' undoubtedly prefer the Arabs to the Jews. Why? For one very simple reason. A British colonial administrator will usually get his training in British possessions like Nigeria, the Sudan, Rhodesia and so on. These places have a well-defined pattern of rule: a few roads, some courts, a little missionary activity, a little medical care for the population. It's all so simple, so straightforward, so calm. No serious problems, and no claims on the part of the governed. The British administrator likes this, and gets used to it. But what is there in Palestine?

Weizmann went on with some animation:

'You won't get very far with a program like that here. Here there are big and complex problems. It's true that the Palestinian Arabs are the guinea pigs the administrator is used to, but by contrast the Jews reduce him to despair.

They are discontented with everything, they ask questions, they demand answers – and sometimes these answers are not easily supplied. The administrator begins to get angry and to see the Jews as a nuisance.[2] But the main thing is that the administrator constantly feels that the Jew is looking at him and thinking to himself: "Are you intelligent? But maybe I'm twice as intelligent as you are." This turns the administrator decisively against the Jews, and he begins to praise the Arabs. Things are quite different with them: they don't want anything and don't bother anyone.'

And then, taking all these circumstances into account, Weizmann worriedly asked: 'What has a British victory to offer the Jews?' Having asked the question, he came to some uncomfortable conclusions. For the only 'plan' which Weizmann can think of to save central European Jewry (and in the first place Polish Jewry) is this: to move a million Arabs who are now in Palestine to Iraq, and to settle four or five million Jews from Poland and other countries on the land where these Arabs were. The British are hardly likely to agree to this. And if they don't agree, what happens next?

I expressed some surprise about how Weizmann hoped to settle five million Jews on territory occupied by one million Arabs.

'Oh, don't worry', Weizmann burst out laughing. 'The Arab is often called the son of the desert. It would be truer to call him the father of the desert. His laziness and primitivism turn a flourishing garden into a desert. Give me the land occupied by a million Arabs, and I will easily settle five times that number of Jews on it.'

Weizmann shook his head sadly and concluded: 'The only thing is, how do we obtain that land?'

3
Meeting: E. Neumann and M.L. Perlzweig – K. Umanskii (Washington, 17 July 1941)

COPY: CZA S25/486

Rabbi Perlzweig, representing the American Jewish Congress, and I, representing the Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs, were received by the ambassador in a friendly and even cordial spirit.

We began by pointing out that the recent developments which have ranged Soviet Russia on the side of the democracies[1] seemed to offer an opportunity

---

Doc. 2

2. 'Nuisance' – in English in the original.

Doc. 3

1. Germany invaded the USSR on 22 June and a mutual aid pact was signed between Britain and the Soviet Union on 13 July 1941.

for establishing better working relations between representatives of Jewish organizations and the Soviet government.

Mr. Umanskii expressed his agreement. He took occasion to say that Jewish groups and organizations and the Jewish press particularly in the US have in the past heaped attacks on the Soviet government. There was a bulky file on the subject. However he felt that the only way to proceed was to draw a line through the past and think of the future. If we were to get into a discussion of the past we would get nowhere.

We then proceeded to discuss two particular questions. The first was the question of permitting certain Jews to leave Russia for Palestine or other countries.[2] Mr. Umanskii took the position that Jews who were residents of territories occupied by Russia since the beginning of the war had become citizens of the Soviet state,[3] and that the overwhelming majority of them – 95 per cent – were happy with their new status. There was therefore no point in attempting to intervene on their behalf. We then proposed that to begin with facilities be granted for the departure of certain Jews who had come into Russian territory from points west of what Mr. Umanskii called the 'Curzon Line'.[4] We mentioned by way of illustration several names including that of Rabbi Shorr of Warsaw, Dr. Sommerstein from Lemberg, and Mrs. Tart[a]kower.[5] Mr. Umanskii remarked that according to his information, Rabbi Shorr has been in Moscow and free for the past four or five months.[6] He did not know whether there were many who wished to leave Russia or where they would go, but suggested that we submit to begin with a list of names which he would be glad to take up with his government. This we agreed to do.

The second question we raised was regarding facilities for extending relief and assistance to such Jews as may be in need of it because they did not fit in with the social and economic system. Mr. Umanskii did not deny that such

---

2. In a letter to the British ambassador to the US, Lord Halifax, dated 23 July 1941, Perlzweig explained: 'Last week I went to see the Soviet ambassador with the object of trying to secure the release of a number of leading rabbis and Jewish leaders whom the Russians have been holding since their invasion of Poland...' (PRO, FO 371/27128, cited in *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 3 [1973], No. 2, p. 75).
3. According to an *ukaz* of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of 29 November 1939, all inhabitants of Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia (former Polish territories) who resided there on 1 and 2 November acquired USSR citizenship.
4. The Curzon Line was the Polish–Russian frontier agreed upon after the Polish–Russian war of 1921, which remained in force until the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact gave the Soviet Union the areas of Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia.
5. Rabbi Moshe Shorr, professor at Warsaw University. Emil Sommerstein (1883–1957), Zionist leader, member of the Polish Sejm in the years 1922–27 and 1929–39, was arrested by the Soviet authorities in Lvov and released at the beginning of 1944.
6. After the restoration of Soviet–Polish diplomatic relations in summer 1941, Polish ambassador in the USSR Stanislaw Kot intended appointing Shorr as embassy advisor for Jewish affairs. However, the latter could not be found among the Polish citizens released from Soviet prisons. Kot twice enquired about Shorr with Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Andrei Vyshinskii – on 6 October 1941 and on 6 December 1941 – but to no avail (see Kot, *Conversations with the Kremlin and Dispatches from Russia*, pp. 19, 50, 168).

cases existed, but asked that we submit our ideas and plans that we had in mind, so that they might be given consideration.

In the course of the discussion, the ambassador took occasion to refer to the satisfactory condition of Russian Jewry in general. He referred to street signs in Yiddish, to the existence of synagogues, to the Jewish republic in Birobidzhan, etc. In reply to an inquiry as to the number of Jews in Birobidzhan, he called in his secretary who produced figures to the effect that the total number was 100,000, of whom 70,000 were in cities and 30,000 in the country. It would seem that these figures included non-Jews, but we did not raise the question.[7]

Some remarks were exchanged regarding the Zionists, Mr. Umanskii taking the position that it would be better not to enter upon a discussion of that subject. He insisted that the government was not arresting or detaining Jews because they were Zionists, that any one could be a Zionist and believe in Zionism without being molested. The Soviet government, he said, took measures only against those people, whether Jews or non-Jews, whose activities were inimical. As we had previously agreed not to raise the fundamental issue regarding the Soviet attitude towards Zionism and Zionists at this time, we did not pursue the subject.

At the end of the interview, which lasted almost an hour, Mr. Umanskii asked a few desultory questions about the situation in Palestine at the moment which seemed designed to lead up to his remark that the future of Palestine would of course be determined at the coming peace conference and that Soviet Russia would have a place and voice at the conference. To this I replied that we would be glad of course to have as many friends at the peace conference as possible.

We left with the understanding that we would submit in due course the material suggested and that there would be further discussions.

The ambassador preserved a further friendly tone and attitude throughout the meeting.

Emanuel Neumann

7. The Jewish population of the Jewish Autonomous Oblast' of Birobidzhan numbered less than 18,000, according to the 1939 population census. This constituted just over 16% of the region's total population. Of these over 13,000 were described as urban dwellers. Jewish colonization of Birobidzhan had begun in 1928 and the area became a Jewish autonomous *oblast'* in 1934.

4
I.J. Linton to M. Shertok (Jerusalem)

TEL: CZA S25/1935
London, 2 August 1941

Brodetsky, Locker, saw last week Novikov, first secretary Russian embassy.[1] Novikov sympathetic request release Polish Zionists which prepared forward Moscow but question probably settled meanwhile by Russo-Polish agreement.[2] Regarding legalisation Zionism replied Soviets cannot permit any movements. Regarding Russian Zionists stated tentatively some prospect obtaining release if emigration secured. Generally might be possible obtain permission leave Russia for Jews desiring emigrate Palestine but no propaganda this connection. Maintained no prohibition personal study Hebrew[3] but considered unlikely Soviets agree include official curriculum and there is general prohibition private tuition. We propose submit memorandum Maiskii 1) release of arrested, banished, Russian Zionists; 2) general permission emigrate Palestine; 3) establishment Palestine Offices;[4] 4) Permit Zionist cultural work; 5) permit study and tuition Hebrew. Cable your views, also number and places imprisoned, banished, Russian Zionists and names.

Linton

1. This meeting followed in the wake of Umanskii's meeting with Neumann and Perlzweig (see Doc. 3). After that meeting Goldmann informed the London office of the Jewish Agency that it was advisable to arrange a similar meeting with Soviet diplomats there (see Sharett, *Yoman medini*, Vol. 5, p. 238).
2. On 30 July 1941, General W. Sikorski, prime minister of the Polish government-in-exile, and Maiskii, signed an agreement in London according to which the 'government of the USSR recognized that the Soviet–German treaties of 1939 pertaining to territorial changes in Poland have lost their validity'. Diplomatic relations were to be restored, and the government of the USSR consented to the formation of a Polish army on Soviet territory. A special protocol attached to the agreement stipulated that upon restoration of diplomatic relations, the government of the USSR would grant an amnesty to all Polish citizens who had been imprisoned or detained on Soviet territory. (General Sikorski Historical Institute, *Documents on Polish–Soviet Relations 1939–1945*, Vol. 1, pp. 141–2).
3. Hebrew had been considered a reactionary language – the language of both the Jewish religion and Zionism – and no teaching of Hebrew had been permitted in the Soviet Union. Insofar as Jews were allowed to educate their young in the national language in areas of Jewish concentration, the language taught, at least in the Ashkenazi communities, was Yiddish.
4. Offices of the Jewish Agency of Palestine, situated in various countries, regulating and assisting immigration to Palestine. The Soviet Union never permitted the establishment of such offices in the USSR.

5
I.M. Maiskii to the USSR People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.1, P.352, D.2404, LL.158–9
London, 2 September 1941
Urgent

The well-known Zionist leader Weizmann came to see me today. He came to ask my advice. The Soviet Jews' appeal met with a warm response among Jews in England and America.[1] Weizmann would like to reply to the appeal with a telegram of sympathy and greetings on behalf of the Zionist movement. He asked if this would be worth his while. Given the Soviet government's negative attitude to Zionism, would such a telegram not evoke a wholly undesirable reaction? I said that I could see no reason why Weizmann should not send his telegram, but I advised him to make sure that the responses to the [Soviet Jews'] appeal should come not only from the Zionists, but also from other Jewish organizations. Weizmann was quite satisfied with this, and told me that there was already a movement among other Jewish organizations in England (especially the Board of Deputies of the Jewish communities which, by the way, has nothing to do with the Soviet councils of deputies)[2] to reply to the Soviet Jews. Weizmann's only doubt was whether to send the telegram over his own signature. He thinks it most important to respond to the Soviet appeal. In England today the Jews are not given any opportunity to express their attitude to the war, and in Palestine the British are hindering the formation of Jewish troop units (there is just one Jewish division).[3] Weizmann noted with great pleasure that in this war the voice of the Jews first resounded from the USSR. He has just returned from the US where he spent four months. His impression was that in the past six to seven weeks public interest in the war has markedly declined since the average American reasons something like this: the Russians are fighting well, and along with the British they'll destroy Hitler somehow or other, so there's no point in us Americans getting too deeply

1. A rally of well-known Jewish figures had been held in Moscow on 24 August 1941, which appealed to the Jews of the world to support the USSR in its fight against the Nazi invasion. The report on the meeting was published by *Soviet War News*, issued by the Soviet embassy in London on 26 August 1941. On 28 August, Weizmann received the bulletin and made an appointment with Maiskii for 2 September 1941 (*The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, Series A, Vol. XX, pp. 192–3).
2. The term Maiskii used in Russian was '*sovet deputatov*' – a term used for the local authorities in the USSR.
3. On 1 December 1939, Weizmann had offered, on behalf of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, to establish a Jewish division within the British army. The discussion of this proposal dragged on for two years until the British Cabinet decided on 13 October 1941 against the organization of a Jewish force (*The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, Series B, Vol. II, pp. 445–8).

involved in these things. Weizmann regards such attitudes as criminally frivolous, and thinks that if American Jewry were to be roused in the right way, it could do much to counteract them. That is why he wholeheartedly welcomes the Soviet Jews' initiative.

Maiskii

6
Ch. Weizmann to I.M. Maiskii (London)

COPY: WA
London, 8 September 1941

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

I enclose herewith, on behalf of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, our reply to the appeal[1] made at a recent Pan-Jewish meeting in Moscow, and should be grateful if you could arrange to have it transmitted.

Yours sincerely,

Ch.W., President

APPENDIX
To the Moscow Anti-Fascist Committee[2]

Your appeal to World Jewry to unite against Hitler and all that he stands for has reached us, and we wholeheartedly respond to it. From the very outset Hitler has made the Jews his chosen victims. In the countries which, one by one, have fallen under his sway he has re-enacted his cruelties in an intensified degree. Fascists all over the world have followed his lead. Now he has reached the Soviet lands. With deep sorrow we hear of your sufferings. But we are proud of the fight which you are putting up in the Soviet armies, whose achievements have earned universal admiration and have strengthened faith in victory. That faith we did not and shall not lose, even in the darkest hours. Where enslaved, the Jews bear their fate with dignity; where free – they fight. In Palestine, the Jewish community, numbering now half-a-million, plays its part in the struggle. Ten thousand Jews have enlisted in Jewish military formations, or in the British Navy and Air Force. They have fought with distinction in Libya, Abyssinia, Greece, Crete and Syria. Many more thousands eagerly await their turn to enlist, and should the enemy ever reach Palestine, men and women of our people will fight as you do. Tens of thousands in other

1. See Doc. 5 and n. 1 there.
2. Officially, no Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee existed until April 1942.

countries ask for a chance to serve in a Jewish army, so that we might, as a people, take our place in the struggle for the common cause.

We send our fraternal greetings. You may assure all your fellow-citizens that the Jews of the world will not fail the common cause.

7
Meeting: D. Ben-Gurion – I.M. Maiskii (London, 9 October 1941)

COPY: BG ARCHIVES
Secret

I began by saying how much I appreciated his kindness in giving me an opportunity of seeing him in these troubled days, and then at once went on to tell him the object of my visit.

I said I had come recently from Palestine, and would shortly be going to the United States. For the last eight years I happened to have been the chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive, but I came to see him now not in that capacity, but as the representative of Jewish labour in Palestine. Our people fully realized the meaning of this war for the existence of the Jewish people and of the labour movement throughout the world, as well as for the USSR.[1] We were terribly anxious to do anything we could to help. We know, of course, the magnitude of the struggle and the gigantic scale of the forces engaged; we knew too that the Jews were only a small people, and Jewish labour only a part of that people, so that necessarily we could not do much. But we could do something. I therefore wanted him to know something of what Jewish labour in Palestine was and stood for. In Palestine the Jewish community was a small community of some half-million people out of a total population of one-and-a-half million. Of this half-million, some 125,000 were members of the Labour Federation. Labour was the leading group in the Jewish community in Palestine. The chairman of the Jewish community was a labour man.[2] Labour was the main colonizing factor in Palestine. Almost all the settlements founded by the Zionist Organization were labour settlements, mainly based on communal (to avoid misunderstanding, I did not say communistic) life; though from the economic point of view they were communistic settlements, our movement was not a communist movement. About 80,000 workers lived in these settlements in Palestine. In America, the great bulk of

1. Ben-Gurion had been chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive since 1935 (and in this capacity, the leading figure of all those participating or assisting in the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine). He had been one of the founders of the Jewish Federation of Labour (Histadrut) and its first secretary-general from 1921 until 1935.
2. Yitzhak Ben Zvi, a leading member of the Histadrut, was chairman of the Vaad Leumi (National Council) of the Jewish Community in Palestine (the *yishuv*) from 1931 until 1944.

Jewish organized labour was behind Palestine labour. There were hundreds of thousands of young men and women in all countries who supported us. We differed on some points not only from the Communists in Russia, but also from continental or British labour. We differed also from other Zionists and Jews, and here the main difference was that we were very serious about our aims: for us Zionism was a matter of life and death, and we meant to achieve it at whatever cost. We were also very serious about our socialist aims, and we meant to achieve those also. In fact we had already built up in Palestine the nucleus of a socialist commonwealth. This had been done on a purely voluntary basis for we had no state powers. But we believed that human beings could, of their own free will, do great things if they meant them seriously.

At present we were concerned about two things in regard to Soviet Russia: first, we were anxious to do what we could to help in the common victory; secondly, we wished to remove the unfortunate misunderstanding which had existed in regard to Palestine. During the disturbances there before the war, we had been attacked by Arab terrorists; they had not been led by Arab labour or even by more progressive elements among the Arab people; but they had the blessing of the Communist Party.[3] I was not criticizing the past; but we were concerned about Russia's attitude towards Palestine in the future. At the end of the war Russia would at the least be one of the three leading powers which would determine the fate of the new world. We in Palestine were a growing community. I had gone to Moscow eighteen years ago on behalf of the Labour Federation of Palestine.[4] But at that time we had been a very small group – the whole Palestinian Jewish community had numbered only some 100,000, and the Labour group only about 8,000. In the last ten years we had brought in some 300,000 people, and as soon as the war was over – whatever happened to be Britain's policy in Palestine – our community would grow. This was a vital matter for the whole of our people, and – I believed – not without some importance to the international labour movement, since we were the only organized labour movement in the whole of the Middle East.

While we realized that at present the main concern of people in Moscow was the prosecution of the war, we knew that the USSR was not exclusively concerned with its own fate. We wished, therefore, to send a delegation of two or three people to Moscow for a dual purpose: (a) to ascertain in what way we could be helpful; in Palestine itself we already had 10,000 men enlisted in the British army, and another 40,000 were eager to fight; but we thought we might also be able to do something outside Palestine; (b) to ensure that Moscow had a clear understanding of the significance of the labour movement in Palestine, and what it meant for the Jewish people and for the labour movement generally.

---

3. During the Arab revolt (1936–39) or 'disturbances' the Arab–Jewish Palestine Communist Party (PCP) supported the Arab side.
4. Ben-Gurion visited the International Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow in 1923 on behalf of the Histadrut.

He said: You are going to America. You will render us a great service if you will impress upon people there the urgency of helping us; we need tanks, guns, planes – as many as possible, and above all, as soon as possible.

I said I would certainly do what I could. I was conscious that it might not be much; but I had some friends in the labour movement in the States, Jewish as well as non-Jewish, and also knew some people who were close to the Administration.

He then said: About the delegation to Moscow, I would suggest that you send me a written memorandum[5] of what you have just told me about the position of labour in Palestine and especially about your collective organization; I will forward it at once to Moscow with my own recommendations. You will understand that in these days Moscow is mainly occupied with the war. He then asked how long I would be staying in England, and I said probably another three or four weeks. He said that in that case he might get a reply from Moscow before my departure.

Before taking leave, I asked him about Umanskii, and whether he was already back in Washington. He said Umanskii was still in Moscow, and he did not know when he would be returning. He knew that our people had been in touch with him about Zionist prisoners,[6] and that our office here was also dealing with this matter. But since I was seeing him on behalf of the Histadrut I did not wish to go into this question.

D. B.-G.

8
S.I. Kavtaradze to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.4, P.3, D.1, LL.2–3
Moscow, 31 December 1941
Secret

REPORT TO THE DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, COMRADE A.IA. VYSHINSKII

On 8 December, on the personal recommendation of the British ambassador to Turkey, Knatchbull Hugessen, the USSR's ambassador Comrade Vinogradov received Elias Menachem Epstein, the spokesman of the Jewish Agency in Palestine on matters of emigration and colonization.[1]

Doc. 7

5. The memorandum was sent to Maiskii on 13 October 1941 – see CZA Z4/14920.
6. See Doc. 3.

Doc. 8

1. Reference is to Eliahu Epstein, head of the Middle East Division of the Jewish Agency Political Department in Turkey. For Epstein's report of this meeting see Doc. 10.

According to Epstein, the Jewish Agency has been officially recognized by the League of Nations, and now has offices in Geneva, London, Washington and Istanbul.

Epstein made the following proposals to Comrade Vinogradov:

1. Palestine would like to establish trade links with the USSR through supply of medicines. If the Soviet government favours this idea, Epstein would like to travel to the USSR with the chemist Il'ia Dobkin, a manufacturing specialist, for negotiations. Epstein also said that the organization which he represents could send a team of doctors and some field hospitals.
2. If Epstein is given permission to enter the USSR, he will want to raise with the Soviet government the question of permission for the elderly relatives of Palestinian Jews to join them in Palestine. It seems that the British government will give permission for one hundred elderly Jews to move to Palestine from the USSR.
3. Epstein expressed a wish that films of military actions be sent to Palestine for screening at a meeting of the Jewish Labour Party.
4. Epstein handed Comrade Vinogradov the resolution of the 45th session of the General Federation of the Jewish Labour Party, dated 20 October 1941 (see Appendix to this report).[2]

The Middle East Department proposes the following:

1. To solicit the opinion of Narkomvneshtorg [the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade] on the trade in medicines with Palestine and on the advisability of allowing Elias Menachem Epstein along with Il'ia Dobkin into the USSR for negotiations.
2. To consider as unacceptable Epstein's proposal to send a team of doctors with field hospitals from Palestine to the USSR.
3. To consider as inexpedient the emigration of elderly Jews from the USSR to join their relatives in Palestine.
4. To raise no objection to the sale by the USSR trade representative in Turkey to Epstein of military films for showing in Palestine.
5. To ask the NKVD whether it has any information about Elias Menachem Epstein or about the organization which he represents.

I await your instructions.[3]

Director of the Middle East Department
S. Kavtaradze

---

2. The meeting actually took place on 19 October. It terminated with a declaration of a week of solidarity with the Soviet Union and ultimately resulted in the establishment of a friendship league with the Soviet Union (see Doc. 15, n. 2).
3. A typewritten note appears at the top left of the first page of the document: 'Comrade Gusev. What's your opinion? In particular, what was the outcome of our conversation with Cripps about the 100 exit permits? A. Vyshinskii, 2. Jan.'

9
F.T. Gusev to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.5, P.3, D.6, LL.1–2
Moscow, 20 January 1942
Secret

PROPOSALS OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE JEWISH AGENCY IN PALESTINE ON EMIGRATION AND COLONIZATION

The Jewish Agency's proposals on emigration and colonization, as expressed by Epstein, the Agency's representative in Ankara, to Comrade Vinogradov[1] have the same aim as those conveyed by the Agency's representative to our embassy in London, and later by the British embassy to Narkomindel in Kuibyshev.[2]

The Palestinian Jews are trying by all means to get permission, if not for a permanent agent in the USSR, then at least for a temporary representative to deal with the migration of Jews from the USSR to Palestine. The Agency's first approach was made in London to Comrade Maiskii,[3] but he advised the Agency to apply to the Soviet government through the British embassy in the USSR.

On 6 November the embassy secretary, Berry, turned to me, and on 18 November Cripps approached you with a request to facilitate the entry into Kuibyshev of Jews who want to obtain entry visas to Palestine. Cripps pointed out that the Palestine government had set a quota of 125 persons for entry to Palestine in the fourth quarter of 1941 and would like to establish its own Agency in the USSR in order to organize the departure of Jews wishing to move to Palestine.

On 27 November 1941, I responded to the requests made by Berry and Cripps on this matter. We acknowledged the inexpediency of having a temporary or permanent representative of the Agency in the USSR to deal with Jewish emigration [to Palestine].

With regard to the departure of Jews from the USSR to Palestine, the general procedure of receiving permission to leave the USSR after submitting the appropriate application to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR remains in place. As for people wishing to go to Kuibyshev to get British entry visas, we promised to consider the embassy's wishes in each individual case and to give the necessary permission.

Since 27 November there have been no requests from the embassy for permission to travel to Kuibyshev.

---

1. See Doc. 8.
2. Soviet government institutions, including the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, were evacuated from Moscow to Kuibyshev in October 1941 as a result of the German advance. So, too, were foreign embassies.
3. See Docs. 4 and 7.

1. I consider Comrade Kavtaradze's proposals to be correct.
2. The resolution of the General Federation of the Jewish Labour Party, which Epstein gave to Comrade Vinogradov, should be conveyed to Comrade Kolesnikov, president of the Red Cross, with the recommendation that medical assistance in the form of medicines, medical equipment and monetary contributions be accepted, but not the proposal to send us field hospitals.[4]

Gusev

10
E. Epstein to M. Shertok (Jerusalem)

COPY: CZA S25/486
Jerusalem, 25 January 1942
Secret

RE: NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN ANKARA

Upon arriving in Ankara in mid-November 1941, I asked the British embassy for a letter of recommendation to the Soviet ambassador, that he receive me for an interview concerning the negotiations the Jewish Agency had previously conducted with Maiskii in London[1] and with Umanskii in Washington.[2] I apprised the British embassy of the issues I intended to raise with the Soviet ambassador. I emphasized that our primary interest at this time was to clarify the possibility of sending Jewish Agency representatives to the USSR in order to make arrangements with respect to emigration [to Palestine] commensurate with the quota we had received for Polish refugees in Russia. My interlocutor, G. Morgan, the British minister, explained that because I was requesting not only a personal recommendation to the Soviet ambassador, but confirmation of several matters which were outside the purview of the British embassy in Ankara, the embassy would have to seek instructions from the Foreign Office in London. The clarification between Ankara and London took more than two weeks, and only on 2 December was a final answer received from the Foreign Office. A positive outcome ensued after our office in London dealt with the

---

Doc. 9

4. In the upper left corner of this document the following typewritten note is appended: 'Comrade Vyshinskii's decision: To Comrade Kavtaradze and Comrade Gusev. Prepare a brief and proposals for Comrade Molotov.'

Doc. 10

1. See Doc. 1.
2. See Doc. 3.

matter on the basis of reports from me and according to your instructions on this subject.[3]

London's approval having been received, the British embassy conveyed to the Soviet ambassador a letter signed by its ambassador, Sir Hugh Knatchbull Hugessen. The letter presented me as a representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine who was authorized to conduct negotiations concerning the emigration of Jews from the USSR and other matters. Also included was a brief explanation of the official status of the Jewish Agency and its tasks: that it is recognized by HM government as an advisory body on affairs relating to the Jewish national home in Palestine, deals with immigration, settlement, and so forth. The letter concluded with a request that the ambassador facilitate the fulfilment of my mission, etc.

A few days later I received an invitation to call on the Soviet ambassador, and the interview was set for 6 January this year.[4]

Even prior to my meeting with Vinogradov, the Soviet ambassador in Ankara, I attempted to obtain information about him and his assistants. I learned that prior to his appointment as ambassador, Vinogradov had been a professor of history at Moscow University and served for only a short time in the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. Ankara is his first posting outside the USSR. He is of Russian origin and comes from a family of workers near Moscow. He is about 40, and as a youth joined the Communist Party, moving to the RCP(b) directly from the Komsomol. I am informed that he does not speak any language other than Russian and it was only in Ankara that he began to learn French, which he still does not speak freely. He uses the services of a translator in all his contacts with foreigners. His translator is a woman, S. Zhegalova, who is also the senior secretary at the embassy. She was described to me as an educated woman who speaks French, English and German perfectly. She received her education in tsarist Russia and abroad. She is a woman of advanced years and a veteran member of the Communist Party who, it seems, enjoys the full confidence of the authorities in Moscow. Apart from her, an important role in the embassy is played by G. Kuznetsov, the ambassador's private secretary, who also seems to serve as an agent of the GPU as part of his consular duties. He is responsible for overlooking the activities of all the members of the embassy as well as the ambassador himself. This position was previously filled by a Jew by the name of Cohen,[5] who was transferred elsewhere last year. I am told that Kuznetsov is a man of limited

---

3. On 28 November 1941, Weizmann applied to the principal private secretary of the Foreign Secretary, Oliver Harvey, and asked him to issue a letter of introduction for Epstein 'who would like to discuss with the Russian embassy there [in Turkey] questions connected with the distribution in Russia of about one hundred Palestinian immigration certificates to Polish Zionists now on Russian territory' (*The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, Series A, Vol. XX, p. 231).
4. The meeting actually took place 8 December 1941 (see Doc. 8).
5. Probably Kogan.

capabilities and an introvert; he knows little French, which is an obstacle in his contacts with the private secretaries of the other ministers in Ankara and with the Turkish authorities. In general, I was able to obtain information about the Soviet minister and his employees only third hand, since they all live in complete isolation within the embassy compound, where they live, take their meals and spend most of their time. All the staff of the embassy are explicitly forbidden to accept invitations from foreigners, except from Turkish officials and other embassies – and then only on official occasions and on the premises of the embassy or in the homes of Turkish officials. Only TASS (the Soviet Telegraphic Agency) correspondents, because of their work, enjoy freedom of movement and are permitted to eat or spend their time wherever or with whomever they wish. Since Soviet Russia has become an ally of England and other democratic countries, social relations between the Soviet embassy and other friendly legations have impoved. However, the relations are still of a purely official nature, because in addition to the barriers created by education and diplomatic codes of behaviour, there is the problem of language. In response to my inquiries into the powers of the Soviet ambassador in Ankara, I was told by a reliable source that although, officially, Vinogradov's activities are restricted to Turkey alone, in fact, together with his colleague in Tehran, he deals with the affairs of the entire Middle East; and there is no doubt that events in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Palestine fall within Vinogradov's sphere of interests and unofficially come under his supervision.

Vinogradov received me in his study – a spacious, resplendent room which, by the way, did not suit the modest deportment of the ambassador himself and still less the large portrait of Stalin in a traditional, simple *tuzhurka*,[6] with a portrait of Molotov on his right and one of Kalinin on his left. The ambassador began the conversation by asking me, simply and courteously, to explain the purpose of my visit. I responded by extending the greetings of the Jewish Agency and explaining the essence of the institution I represented. When I described the structure of the Jewish Agency, the ambassador asked me which public and political blocs supported it and which opposed it. After this I proceeded to explain the actual point of my mission. I pointed out that we had already asked his comrades, Maiskii in London and Umanskii in Washington, to transmit our wishes and requests to Moscow. However, since matters had not yet been arranged, we saw fit to approach him as well. We considered it important and useful to explain our wishes to the Soviet ambassador in Ankara, who is geographically nearest to us and can therefore deal with them more diligently and more methodically than other Soviet ministers – even if Palestine does not lie within his official sphere of activity. At this point the ambassador interrupted, remarking that we were more or less right to make this assumption because, even though he is only the ambassador in Turkey,

6. A tunic.

he has been given charge, for example, of dealing with Soviet nationals residing in Palestine. I went on to brief him about the talks held by Prof. Weizmann, Comrade Ben-Gurion, and Prof. Brodetsky with Maiskii in London and by Dr. Goldmann and Rabbi S. Wise with Umanskii in Washington. No sooner had I mentioned the release of Zionist prisoners in Soviet Russia than the ambassador remarked that Zionists had never been arrested in Russia for their national views or their aspirations to settle in Palestine, but only because of their connections with political organizations abroad – which was prohibited in Soviet Russia if pursued without the knowledge and permission of the authorities. I focused my conversation with the ambassador on the emigration from Russia of the refugees, for whom we had received immigration permits to Palestine. I emphasized that all arrangements for the emigration of refugees, relatives and other categories whom we wanted to bring to Palestine would be undertaken in accordance with the prevailing laws of the USSR and in accordance with conditions dictated by the state of emergency. In order to organize this effort and ensure its speedy and normal implementation, it was important that one or two representatives of the Jewish Agency reside in the USSR and conduct the operation there, with the help of the Soviet authorities. I explained the urgency of the matter and our vital need for new immigrants to Palestine at this time so that we can step up our war effort: enlistment in the army, accelerating the pace of production in industry, agriculture, etc. Later in the conversation the ambassador asked me to explain the social composition of the *yishuv*, as he had not yet had the opportunity to hear anything about it. I was absolutely stunned, and deeply insulted, when he asked me, in a tone both naive and incredulous: 'Do Jews work in Palestine?' Now I could understand the workings of malicious communist propaganda which portrayed the *yishuv* to the peoples of the USSR as nothing but an imperialist enterprise and a movement of Phalansterians and exploiters.

In my description of the *yishuv*'s social composition I dwelt at length on the labour movement in Palestine and on its achievements in various spheres. Here, too, the ambassador displayed his meagre knowledge when he asked whether workers in Palestine had the right to strike. I apprised him of the Histadrut Council's resolutions on solidarity and assistance to the Soviet Union,[7] of which I had a copy with me, and I added that the Histadrut's executive committee had approached the Trade Unions Centre in the USSR regarding a medical mission to aid the Red Army.[8] I noted that as yet no reply had been received to this proposal. I also informed him about the broadcast[s] to USSR Jewry from Radio Jerusalem and about the feelings of fraternity and sympathy with which the Jews in Palestine are following the courageous war being waged by the peoples of the Soviet Union and by the Red Army against

7. See Doc. 8 and n. 2 there.
8. No details of this approach have been traced. For medical help of the *yishuv* to the Soviet Union, see Doc. 14 and Doc. 27 and n. 4 there.

the forces of fascism and Nazism. The ambassador asked me to convey to the Histadrut's executive committee his cordial thanks in the name of the government of Russia, and noted that the silence of USSR institutions should not be construed as signifying a lack of interest. The situation in Moscow and in Kuibyshev was such that prosecution of the war commanded the complete attention and time of both institutions and individuals, with the result that the handling of many matters, even important ones, was simply delayed. This also accounts for the fact that we still have not received a reply from the Soviet ambassador in Kuibyshev to the enquiries of our people in London and Washington.

When I described our war effort in Palestine to the ambassador and provided him with details about mobilization figures (I also mentioned enlistment among the Arabs),[9] our efforts in industry, and more, I stressed the dedication of the Jewish community in Palestine to the war of annihilation against Hitler and our readiness to make any sacrifice for the sake of victory. The war, I said, has clearly shown who is interested in the victory of democracy and progressive humanity and who desires a regime of fascism and Nazi rule in the East as well. I went on to express my regret that over the years Russia had adopted a mistaken political orientation towards those circles in Palestine and in the neighbouring countries who had quickly been revealed as agents and henchmen of Nazism. I dwelt on the clericalist, reactionary social background of the mufti[10] and his gang and on the anti-democratic character of the Arab national movement in its various manifestations in Palestine and in the neighbouring countries. The ambassador heard me out attentively, and only when I had concluded did he remark: 'This orientation which you called a Soviet orientation – was it not a Trotskyite business?' Reacting to what I told him about our war effort, he said he congratulated us on the important results we had already achieved and wished us success for the future, because, 'In this war it makes no difference how and where Hitler's strength will be broken, whether on the banks of the Volga or in Libya. The important thing is to destroy the Nazi menace and to mobilize all the forces of progressive humanity towards that goal.'

I now proceeded to describe our economic capability in Palestine which had not yet been properly exploited and which in certain circumstances might also prove beneficial to Soviet Russia. I spoke about the noted experts we have in various industries in Palestine: scientists, managers, etc. I raised the question of the citrus crops, pointing out the many possibilities which exist to utilize them to manufacture products which could be of great use to the Soviet army, such as concentrated vitamins, and the like. The ambassador showed great

9. See Doc. 5, n. 3.
10. Hajj Amin al-Husayni, the Arab mufti of Jerusalem, president of the Arab Higher Committee, in exile from 1937. During the war he worked in Germany as a propagandist, mobilizing Muslim public opinion for the Nazi war effort.

interest, saying that even though under the prevailing conditions of transport between Russia and the Middle East it was difficult to assume the possibility of normal economic relations, this situation would not dissuade him from seeking opportunities for mutual contact – even in these conditions – in order to take advantage of the little that could still be implemented. He has decided to send someone to Palestine in the near future to deal with several matters, particularly economic affairs. As he already mentioned, there are Soviet nationals in Palestine, [2]00 in number, the majority residing in Tel Aviv. He maintains ties with them and wishes to strengthen those ties through an embassy official who will maintain direct contact with them. The ambassador suggested that when I visit Istanbul I should meet with Mr. Potapov, the commercial attaché in the Soviet embassy, who will be able to give me more details about the economic assignments which will be entrusted to the embassy's emissary to Palestine. He said he would inform Potapov that I will call on him.

At the conclusion of the conversation I asked the ambassador to convey our request to his government together with his recommendation. The ambassador replied that he would definitely do this and would apprise us of the results immediately upon receiving a reply. But there is no reason to believe that the reply will be immediate, for the reasons he has already mentioned – namely, because prosecution of the war is interfering with the ability to settle other matters with the requisite speed. Moreover, in addition to transmitting our specific requests to the commissar of foreign affairs, Mr. Molotov, he would also relay other subjects I had raised in our talk. Incidentally, throughout the conversation the ambassador took notes, and at the end of our talk I was amazed to hear him read out what he had written and ask me to correct whatever I thought necessary. In retrospect, I was pleased at this because it afforded me the opportunity to explain several points which had not been understood properly and to round off others. The conversation with the ambassador lasted about an hour and a half.

Leaving the ambassador, I encountered his private secretary Kuznetsov. He inquired how the talk had gone and whether I was satisfied with the results. I provided him with particulars about myself, as a candidate to serve as a Jewish Agency emissary to Russia, together with Dobkin.

I could sum up my impressions of my talk with the ambassador and his secretary in one phrase: ignorance mingled with interest. Ignorance, which is the result of arrogance and communist propaganda; magniloquence; prejudices which bear the seal of enmity towards everything that does not bear the official communist stamp; on the other hand, interest, which is the product of the recent period of shocks fomented by the war and the upheaval in Soviet foreign policy. Throughout the conversations I sensed that even if my presentation did not advance our interests towards their final solution, nevertheless the very fact of being in direct communication with the ambassador, who in one way or another is also in charge of Palestinian affairs,

and the explanations I gave him, were a service in themselves which may yet be beneficial to us.

Second Call on the Ambassador

Four days after my talk with Ambassador Vinogradov, I received an invitation to dine with him and to attend the screening of a film about the war in Russia in one of the embassy's halls. [...][11]

I had very little opportunity that evening to speak with the ambassador, who received me with the information that no reply had yet arrived from Kuibyshev and by remarking that, 'What had to be done, was done.' The ambassador introduced me to the above-mentioned Mrs. Zhegalova, and I spoke with her briefly about Palestine. Certain comments she made suggest that her understanding of [Middle] Eastern and Palestinian affairs surpasses that of the ambassador and his private secretary. The conditions of the gathering were not conducive to lengthy conversations. I regretted this, particularly as I had heard good opinions of her and of her importance in the embassy. The ambassador also introduced me to Mr. Zharov, the chief TASS correspondent in Ankara, taking the opportunity to observe that he, Zharov, would be interested in what I had to say. I arranged to meet with Zharov the following day and afterwards recounted to him the gist of my observations to the ambassador about our war effort and our achievements in terms of the *yishuv*'s growth in recent years, the mobilization campaign, the decision of the Histadrut Council on solidarity with and aid to Soviet Russia, the broadcasts to the Jews of the USSR from Jerusalem, and the fraternal and sympathetic feelings with which the Palestinian Jews are following the war being waged by the peoples of the Soviet Union and by the Red Army against fascism and Nazism. Mr. Zharov took notes as I spoke and said he would telegraph my comments to Kuibyshev that very day. Whether they were published, and in what form, I do not know.

Kuznetsov, whom I encountered that evening, told me that the substance of my conversation with the ambassador had already been transmitted to Kuibyshev. But he, too, cautioned me against harbouring excessive optimism about a speedy reply. The reply, when it comes, will be conveyed directly to me if I am still in Turkey; otherwise it will be transmitted to the Jewish Agency Executive in Jerusalem.

Meeting with Potapov, the Soviet Commercial Attaché in Istanbul

On the advice of Ambassador Vinogradov, during my stay in Istanbul I called on Potapov, the commercial attaché in the Soviet embassy. Potapov had already been briefed about me and received me amicably. A Kalmyk by origin, he still speaks Russian with a foreign accent. He is convivial and more amenable to conversation than anyone I had met earlier in the Soviet embassy. Before being appointed to this post Potapov served for two years as deputy

11. One paragraph, describing the film screened at the embassy, has been omitted.

commercial attaché in the Soviet embassy in Italy, where he also learned Italian.

Potapov repeated what I had already heard from the ambassador concerning their decision to send an emissary to Palestine to deal specifically with economic affairs. Potapov has been interested in Palestine for some time after reading and hearing about its great economic development, particularly during the last few years. Even though the maritime link between ports in the USSR and Palestine has been in effect severed, there are still several possibilities for establishing a land link, especially via Iraq and Iran. The embassy's emissary in Palestine will have to study thoroughly the problems of economic manufacture [there] and opportunities for barter trade with the USSR. Potapov attaches special importance to the medical supply industry in Palestine and to the related chemical and pharmaceutical industries. In addition, he will need to examine a proposal received from a Palestinian citizen named Ruhimovitz to open an office in Palestine for the expedition of packages of food and clothing to refugees in Soviet Russia. The Soviet government has already given its consent, but the position of the Palestinian authorities has yet to be clarified. Another of the emissary's tasks will be to establish in Palestine an office of Sovkino to supply local cinemas with Soviet films, for which there are increasing requests from cinema owners in Palestine, notably in Tel Aviv. When I asked when the emissary was expected to arrive and who it would be, Potapov replied that the embassy intended to send him in January. The person had yet to be selected, but he would probably be an official of Intourist.

I repeated to the commercial attaché some of what I had told the ambassador, though concentrating on economic matters. The attaché heard me with interest and thanked me when I suggested providing him with written material about our economic enterprises and branches of industrial production. I made use of several issues of *Palestine and Middle East* which I had with me, but because no one in the embassy could read English I had to translate the articles into Russian. Incidentally, I received no reply to my question about the economic memorandum which we submitted to the Soviet embassy in Istanbul last year. Potapov himself has never seen such a memorandum and promised to look into the matter.

At the conclusion of our talk I suggested to Potapov that his emissary to Palestine approach the Jewish Agency, which will give him all the help he needs. It would be useful if we were informed in advance, before he set out. Potapov thanked me and said that he knows that the Jews are the most important element in the economic life of Palestine, adding that he had been informed by the embassy in Ankara that I represent the most important – and the official – Jewish institution in Palestine. His emissary would naturally avail himself of our assistance and advice, but first he would have to report to the British authorities in order to avoid undesirable misunderstandings. In this connection the attaché hinted subtly at the difficulties his emissary might

encounter in Palestine in view of the 'exaggerated suspicion' which authorities abroad had harboured towards Soviet ambassadors in the past.[12]

The commercial attaché requested that the Jewish Agency supply him with economic information from time to time, as this could be mutually beneficial even if existing conditions did not permit immediate implementation of ideas. I promised that we would send him the economic literature that is published in Palestine and said that we would be pleased to answer, to the best of our ability, any questions he might have.

On my way from Istanbul to Palestine I made a one-day stopover in Ankara on 26 December and phoned Kuznetsov to inquire whether any reports had been received in the meantime from Kuibyshev. I received a negative answer and the assurance that any reply that did arrive would be transmitted to our office in Jerusalem.

To conclude the report, I wish to place on record my doubts that the Soviet government will reply positively to our requests for the release of imprisoned and exiled Zionists and for [stationing] Jewish Agency emissaries in the USSR to handle the emigration of refugees and relatives. My doubts stem from the impression I gleaned in my conversations with Ambassador Vinogradov, which made it abundantly clear to me that a Soviet diplomat has very little say in determining policy or in handling matters large and small alike. Only a direct appeal to the heads of the government in Russia proper might perhaps ensure our case a proper hearing. On the other hand, all the reports reaching me from reliable sources show that there has been no change in the *domestic* policy of the USSR despite the Soviet government's foreign policy. Several facts prove this. Concurrent with heightened political and military cooperation between Soviet Russia and the democracies, Stalin is stepping up his surveillance over public opinion inside the USSR – in order to prevent deviations and 'misunderstandings' in evaluating this cooperation with an element which fundamentally remains as unacceptable in communist eyes as it was before the German attack on Russia. It is best, then, to beware of illusions in this regard when planning various activities in connection with Soviet Russia. In my opinion, it is a mistake to think that Zionist activity will more likely be permitted in the USSR today than it has been in the past. I think it is important to draw practical conclusions from this affair not only in terms of assessing our prospects in the negotiations we have conducted until now with representatives of the Soviet authorities abroad, but also in terms of making a general evaluation of the Russian factor in this war and afterwards.

E.E.

12. Vinogradov had inquired at the British embassy at the end of October whether a Soviet consular official could investigate the position of Soviet subjects in Palestine. In London, an official of the Foreign Office, H.M. Eyres, made the following comment on the Soviet application in a letter to a colleague at the Colonial Office, S.E.V. Luke, dated 5 November 1941: 'You will remember that for years past the Russians have been trying to send a representative to Palestine to examine various properties which the Soviet government claims.' On 11 November 1941, Luke replied to Eyres: 'In the circumstances, we do not wish to oppose the Soviet request' (PRO, FO 371/27146).

11
Ch. Weizmann to I.M. Maiskii (London)

COPY: WA
London, 2 March 1942

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

I must apologize for the delay in sending you the memorandum of which we spoke when I last had the pleasure of seeing you.[1] Unfortunately I have not lately been in a position to do very much work myself, and have had to put off writing it. The same reason has caused the postponement of my departure for America, though we expect to leave very shortly now.

To what is said in the memorandum I would only like to add the following few notes:

Three of the most fundamental aspects of the Soviet social philosophy are embodied in the national system which is being built up in Palestine by the Zionist movement: collective welfare and not individual gain is the guiding principle and goal of the economic structure; equality of standing is established in the community between manual and intellectual workers; and consequently the fullest scope is provided for the intellectual life and the development of labour. There are no fundamental psychological barriers to mutual understanding, and the Zionist movement has never felt antagonistic to the Soviet social philosophy. The Zionists, like the Soviets, construct their economy according to plan, for both have to build up in backward countries a fully developed modern society, and each has to transform the human material used in the work. The work of the Zionists is on a small scale, but their experience enables them to appreciate the work of the USSR carried through on so enormous a scale. The vast majority of adherents of Zionism have close personal and family relations with the USSR, and a peculiar interest in, and special sympathy with, its people. The heroism and genius with which the USSR has met the Nazi onslaught and defended the cause of civilisation have been hailed with admiration and understanding among Zionists.

In conclusion, may I express my firm hope and belief that the Soviet arms, which have already achieved such brilliant results, will succeed in freeing their country from the enemy, and will thus contribute to lifting the pall of darkness now hanging over a distracted world, and that the forces of progress and freedom will then unite in order to undertake the work of reconstruction which will lie before them. I have no doubt that the Soviet government and people will show sympathy and understanding for the vexed Jewish problem which has weighed on us and on Europe for so many decades.

I would like to thank you personally for your kindness in receiving me, and in listening to our views.

Yours very sincerely,

Ch. Weizmann

---

1. See Doc. 5.

APPENDIX

Memorandum on the USSR and Zionist Aims

Hitler has placed the Jewish question in the forefront, and used it as his main instrument to foment fascism throughout the world. He could not have achieved this measure of success were there not a Jewish problem which the countries of central and east-central Europe have failed to solve, and widespread passions to which he was able to appeal.

Numbers and Distribution of Jews

1. In September 1939, approximately

USSR	3,000,000
US	almost 5,000,000
British Empire	750,000
Palestine	500,000
Poland	3,000,000
Baltic States	250,000
Romania, Hungary, Slovakia	1,500,000
Greater Germany	
Czech Protectorate	450,000
Western Europe	500,000
North Africa	500,000
Near and Middle East (without Palestine)	500,000
South America	almost 500,000

Within the frontiers reached by the USSR in June 1941 their Jewish population was increased to almost 5,000,000.

Position of Jews in East-Central Europe, and Need for Emigration

2. It is impossible to forecast what the decrease in the Jewish population will be owing to massacres and sufferings inflicted by the fascists, nor what the exact future international frontiers will be, but it seems certain that the 3,500,000 or more Jews who will be concentrated in the countries of central and east-central Europe, viz. Poland, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Austria, Germany – will represent the most urgent aspect of the postwar Jewish problem.

3. Rural overcrowding in these countries drives the surplus population into towns not able to receive them. The ensuing sharp competition between Jews and non-Jews has, in the last few decades, given rise to a virulent antisemitism, which has been brought to a climax by Nazi influence. The Jews have been systematically squeezed out of the economic life of the country, partly by direct anti-Jewish legislation, partly by a special economic and financial policy and an administrative practice calculated to weaken the economic position of the Jews.

4. The Germans have brought about the mass annihilation of Jews, expulsions from their places of residence, concentration camps and complete economic ruin. It will be quite impossible to restore the pre-war position; and although a part of the Jewish population may be reintegrated, there cannot be any doubt that the need for emigration will be more acute than ever.

Jewish Wanderings and the Jewish National Idea

5. Jewish migrations from land to land and from continent to continent are as old as the dispersion and have never solved the Jewish problem. From 1881 to the First World War, about three million Jews emigrated from Eastern Europe to the United States and other countries of the Western Hemisphere and the British Empire. The pace of emigration from all countries of east-central Europe would have increased in the years between the wars were it not for the fact that the countries of immigration, especially the US, introduced severe restrictions upon immigration. Even so, hundreds of thousands did emigrate. Out of this migration process grew the foundation of the Jewish national home in Palestine.

6. One of the few constructive results of the Treaty of Versailles was international confirmation of the Zionist ideal of reconstituting the Jewish nation in its ancient country. After thirty years of preliminary work the Balfour Declaration and the mandate opened the way to the realization of the age-old dream. The historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine received international recognition, and Jewish immigration into the country as of right and not on sufferance was proclaimed. Palestine became the country of the largest Jewish immigration, the only country of organized, planned Jewish immigration. Between 1918 and 1941 the Jewish population in Palestine increased from 60,000 to over 500,000, and from 10 per cent to almost one-third of the total population – the highest percentage of Jewish population in any country of the world.

7. Among the countries of Jewish immigration, in Palestine alone the Jew does not find a fully developed economy, to which he has to adapt himself, but creates a new economic life of his own. Zionism, in transplanting the Jewish masses into Palestine, aims at transforming them into a normal people, free from all the anomalies of Jewish economic life in the Diaspora and active in all branches of productive work, agriculture, industry, transport, etc. Only such an economic structure offers a secure basis for a healthy cultural life and for sound economic and social relations with the Arab population.

8. It is this ideal of work and of return to the soil that enabled scores of thousands of young Jews to overcome the age-long habits of town life and the unfamiliar conditions in a country so different from those of their birth, and to found a Jewish economy on agriculture and industry. They have established agricultural settlements on cooperative and communal lines; thousands have become wage earners in the privately owned Jewish plantation colonies. They build roads and bridges, they hew stones, afforest the hills, drain swamps, drive motor cars and buses, make machines, work in the electricity and Dead Sea potash works, on the railways and in the ports. The Jewish working man has gained a firm foothold in all fields of labour.

9. The agricultural colonisation of the Jewish Agency is mainly a workers' colonisation. Of the 150,000 hectares of land in Jewish possession, about 60,000 are in the hands of the Jewish National Fund, as the inalienable property of the Jewish nation. Of the 72,000 persons living on agriculture in

1940, about 40,000 lived in workers' colonies, which are built on the principle of self-labour and cooperation, more than half this number being in collective settlements where all the means of production and its results belong to the commune, its members working according to their ability and using the fruits of common work according to their needs. These flourishing settlements are living witnesses to the possibility of a society built on solidarity instead of profit.

10. The following figures, based on estimates of the Statistical Department of the Jewish Agency for 1940, give an idea of what has already been achieved. Of the 500,000 Jews then in Palestine 200,000 were economically active. Their vocational distribution was as follows: agriculture 37,000, industry 36,000, transport 9,000, building 14,000, clerical and government service 19,000, commerce 23,000, professions 20,000, domestic service 14,000, finance 10,000, various 10,000.

Further Possibilities of Palestine

11. So far the Jews have acquired only about 150,000 (out of the 2,600,000) hectares of land in Palestine and have settled on it over half a million people. The Arab population – as every objective observer agrees – has derived great benefits from this vast economic development. Its numbers have doubled in the last twenty years. There are very considerable possibilities of development in agriculture and, given favourable political conditions, two or three million Jews could be settled within the next fifteen or twenty years.

No Alternative to Palestine

12. No country possessed of wide stretches of white man's land is prepared to invite two to three million Jews to form compact settlements within its borders – neither the US nor any British dominion, nor any of the South American republics, nor, we take it, the USSR, while the numbers which schemes of settlement in tropical or Arctic regions, if at all feasible, could absorb, would make practically no impression on the problem.

The USSR and the Jewish Problem

13. Past misunderstandings should not be allowed to bar a new orientation of the USSR towards Zionism. Zionist Congresses have, quite naturally, protested against the proscription of their movement and of the Hebrew language in the USSR and against the treatment of Zionists as counter-revolutionaries. But they never took up a hostile attitude towards the Soviet government. The USSR, as itself containing almost one-third of world Jewry, and as the closest neighbour of the countries in which the problem is most acute, and as one of the Great Powers which will be responsible for the peace settlement must take an interest in the Zionist solution of the Jewish question.

12
Meeting: M.M. Litvinov – Ch. Weizmann (Washington, 6 May 1942)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.0129, OP.26, P.2, D.143, L.4.
Secret

The Zionist leader Dr. Weizmann, who had arrived from England, visited me together with the local Zionist representative Mr. Goldmann. Weizmann said that he had come to pay his respects since he has always been on good terms with Comrade Maiskii. In the course of our conversation he naturally told me about Zionist affairs, and suggested that I should receive the appropriate Zionist literature so that I would be well informed at the time of the peace conference, at which the Jewish question would be finally resolved.

M. Litvinov

13
Magen Society[1] to M. Shertok (Tel Aviv)

COPY: CZA S25/1935
Tel Aviv, 18 June 1942

Dear Sir,

As you are undoubtedly aware, some time ago we received a letter from the American Jewish Congress informing us that Mr. Litvinov, ambassador of the USSR [in the United States], in the course of a conversation with a Zionist delegation which raised the issue of releasing Zionist prisoners [in the Soviet Union], suggested that he be provided with the names of the exiles and prisoners so that he could transmit them to the government in Russia.

Because of the extreme importance of this subject, we decided to discuss it at a session of the executive plenum, which decided by majority vote: *Not to provide any list of imprisoned and exiled Zionists to Mr. Litvinov in America.*

The reasons:

(a) We have no accurate list of the prisoners and exiles. A list containing names of hundreds of people – whose connections with us have been much diminished during the past three to five years – is liable to lead to unfortunate consequences.

(b) If this list were transmitted to Russia, the GPU would seize on the pretext of the circumstances and conditions of the war to state that the search for hundreds of people throughout the USSR would require a great deal of

1. The Magen Society was established in 1928 in Tel Aviv to assist imprisoned Zionists in Soviet Russia. In 1940 its representative was invited to participate in the Committee for Russian Jewish Affairs adjunct to the Jewish Agency for Palestine (see Doc. 1, n. 2).

time; moreover, we can assume, *based on past experience*, that no reply would be forthcoming.

(c) The list, if considered to be a result of external pressure, could prove quite harmful to our comrades, some of whom may have been 'released' from prison and are ostensibly free. It should also be taken into account that more Zionists were arrested during the past year.

(d) Litvinov's suggestion is merely a diplomatic recommendation which does not obligate him or the Soviet government.

(e) We should presently insist on the release of all Zionist prisoners and exiles and that those who wish to do so be permitted to emigrate to Palestine. Supplying a list of Zionists could seriously dilute the impact of that demand.

The minority offered the following reasons for making the list available to Litvinov:

(a) It is possible that the Zionists will be released as an exceptional case.

(b) There is hope that perhaps dozens of our comrades will be rescued from imprisonment.

(c) The list will in any case not harm comrades who are imprisoned as Zionists.

(d) There is no use waiting for a decisive turnabout in the policy of the Soviet government towards Zionism, but there are grounds for hoping that Zionists will be released on an individual basis.

Because we attach great importance to this matter, we have decided to send you the resolution of the executive together with the reasons 'for' and 'against', and we request that you inform us of your views as soon as possible.

Should you conclude that special consultation is necessary on this important matter, please let us know when the meeting will take place. In any event, we await your prompt reply.[2]

Yours truly,

Magen
Society for Help to Those Who Suffer for Zionism, Judaism and All Jewish National Values in Soviet Russia
Executive Committee
Sh[neur] Aharonov
B. West

2. On 22 July 1942, Shertok replied: 'My expertise in USSR internal affairs does not suffice for me to take upon myself the responsibility of settling the differences among your members.' On 12 August 1942 Magen expressed to the World Jewish Congress its decision not to forward the list, and in a letter dated 26 September 1942, a Congress official replied, 'perhaps you are right since you are better experts in this field than we are'. He added that the Soviet embassy claimed that it had no knowledge of any such prisoners. CZA J89/125.

14
M.A. Kostylev to S.I. Kavtaradze

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.5, P.3, D.1, LL.7–8
Ankara, 22 July 1942
Secret

Epstein spoke only once to the ambassador of the USSR, and the content of this conversation was set out in the letter of 8 December 1941, which you mentioned.[1] It should be noted that Epstein was particularly insistent that he should visit the USSR to resolve all the questions which he had raised. In the middle of December Epstein called on the USSR trade representative in Istanbul, Comrade Potapov. In their conversation Epstein did not raise the matter of establishing trade relations between Palestine and the USSR, but simply sought to find out about the possibility of helping the Red Army by sending medical and other supplies. Soon afterwards, Epstein went back to Palestine, and neither the embassy nor the trade mission received any further communications from him.

So far as his proposal for establishing trade links with Palestine goes, the matter stands at present as follows: the USSR trade mission in Turkey has repeatedly received similar proposals from Palestine. In particular, in January 1942 representatives of a number of Palestinian trading firms approached the mission asking to be supplied with cotton, linen, hemp and sugar-beet seeds, a thousand beech or oak barrels, fertilizers and a thousand tons of iron, in exchange for medicines and pharmaceutical goods. The trade mission reported this to Narkomvneshtorg [People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade], and received the reply that since it was at present impossible to satisfy the Palestinian firms' demands, we must refrain from concluding any such deals. Subsequently, in view of the great interest in Soviet films in Palestine, and the importance for our country of their being shown there, the trade mission concluded an agreement with the Palestinian firm of Schoenfeld to sell it twenty full-length films, eight short films and 100 newsreels, all for about 24,000 American dollars. However, because of some new regulations about Jews leaving Palestine, Schoenfeld was unable to go to Istanbul to finalize the terms of the agreement, and the trade mission cancelled it. At present the trade mission is again negotiating on behalf of Sovintorgkino [the Soviet Cinema Foreign Trade Department] for the sale of this consignment of Soviet films to another Palestinian firm. The trade mission expects to spend almost the whole

1. On 25 June 1942, the director of the Middle East Department of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, Sergei Kavtaradze, urged the Soviet ambassador in Turkey, Sergei Vinogradov, to assess to what extent the proposals of Eliahu Epstein (see Docs. 8, 9, 10) were serious, and to inform him whether Epstein had called the embassy again (AVP RF, f.0118, op.5, p.3, d.1, l.6). The letter of 8 December has not been traced.

sum received from this deal on medicines, chemical and pharmaceutical goods and medical instruments.

These facts indicate that Palestinian firms and merchants are very interested in setting up trade relations with the Soviet Union. I suppose that this fact would have political rather than commercial significance for us. However, this idea can be implemented only if we have a Soviet citizen in Palestine, if only in the guise of a permanent representative of some trading organization. I think it would be worthwhile to raise this question with the authorities in Narkomindel.

USSR Chargé d'Affaires in Turkey
M. Kostylev

15
Y. Klinov to M. Shertok (Tel Aviv)

COPY: CZA S25/486
Jerusalem, 30 August 1942

RE: THE SOVIET DELEGATION IN PALESTINE[1]

Now that the representatives of the Soviet embassy in Ankara have ended their visit to the country, and I have met and talked to these people a number of times – in the Jerusalem Workers' Council, at the league[2] convention and also at a press conference we held for them – I would like to give you some of my impressions and conclusions regarding this visit:

The two men. Mikhailov and Petrenko, the representatives, certainly gave the impression of being educated people, with political training. Mikhailov, the first secretary at the embassy, is a linguist by education; a man who possesses self-control and can hold his own in circumstances of general confusion. Petrenko, the second representative, the head of the Press Department at the embassy in Ankara, a Ukrainian born in Odessa, is well versed in the Jewish question. There is no doubt that our achievements in Palestine have greatly impressed them. They learned a great deal here, took notes, and one can assume that they will submit their report and include in it much of what we said, to the Soviet envoy and perhaps even further. And this is, in fact, where the main importance of their visit lies. If we wanted Moscow to know more about our aspirations, our situation and our potential here in Palestine, we

1. See Doc. 10.
2. The Public Committee to Aid the Soviet Union, unofficially known as the V League, opened its constituent convention on 25 August 1942. It was affiliated with the Histadrut and its membership comprised mainly left-wing members of that organization.

have now been presented with an extraordinary opportunity to do so. And this is important, even without considering what the outcome may be. As for myself, I am of the opinion that in the future we must make every possible effort to foster this link.

Attitude to Zionism. In spite of all their admiration for our achievement, they had constantly reservations about any commitment to Zionism. And though in most cases they were careful not to talk about it, the truth sometimes came out. Thus, Rubashov mentioned that Mikhailov had told him: The achievement is immense; but Zionism, the Zionist movement... and you certainly know that Mikhailov, the first secretary, intentionally avoided visiting the Jewish Agency. It was deliberate that only Petrenko came and he was received by Gruenbaum, Joseph, and Dobkin. The excuse was that Mikhailov had gone to Tel Aviv. But half an hour later he came to a press conference in Jerusalem and I met him there. The delegation came to the Vaad Leumi twice. Thus they learned to differentiate between the representatives of the *yishuv* and those of the Zionist movement. But, even in this domain, they sometimes exhibited naivité. At the press conference, for instance, during the discussion on the exchange of information on Russia and Palestine, Petrenko said that it had long ago occurred to them to suggest broadcasting to Palestine in Hebrew from Baku or Tiflis [Tbilisi][3]. At that same conference I made several requests, on behalf of the journalists, relating to the improvement of information. Among other things, I asked the representatives to aid the press in Palestine in determining at last the real number of Zionist prisoners in Soviet Russia, and what their fate was – especially from the time Russia joined the Allies fighting against Hitler. They were not flustered. The reply was that they would consider the request.

Attitude to the communists. I do not know whether the representatives met the communists anywhere, or received information from them. We had the impression that they were careful not to meet them. The communists had not been conspicuous at the league convention, and none of them had spoken. Haya Lichtenshtein's son, Mr. Al-Roy – Weizmann's nephew – went to the rostrum once, and announced he would speak on behalf of the Palestine Communist Party. There was a storm, and shouts were heard: 'Get down, the mufti's men will not speak here'. The representatives sitting at the presidium table did not intervene in the incident. Of course, they were advised who the Palestinian communists were, what their part in the events had been, and about their connection with the mufti's men and the Italian agents. The communists, for their part, also wanted to clarify their views. But they did not have much success. The following incident occurred: [Gershon] was speaking to Petrenko about a press conference. This same Al-Roy heard this, went over

3. No Hebrew broadcasts were made from the Soviet Union during the war or afterwards (until 1967). There were however broadcasts to the Middle East in Arabic beginning in August 1943. The Soviets also began broadcasting in Yiddish in the summer of 1941, but only to the US and Britain.

to Petrenko and said: 'The Central Committee of the Communist Party objects to this meeting.' Petrenko looked at him for a moment, said nothing, then turned to Svet and said in Al-Roy's presence: 'And so, we shall meet the Hebrew press tomorrow.' It is also true that in the confusion there were shouts from the floor, addressed to Al-Roy: 'Trotskyist, get down!'

The session of the convention – the second one – was truly Zionist in content. The representatives were told most of the things we had to say about our aims, our attitude to fascism, the importance of our achievements, the discrimination against the Hebrew language and Zionism in Russia, the hope for improvement in relations, the hope of seeing a mass immigration of refugees from Russia to Palestine, and so on.

Attitude to the Arabs. As far as I know, the representatives only met the Arabs in Jerusalem (at the training farm in Talpiyot) and also in Bethlehem, at the home of Bandak (one of those close to the League for Rapprochement).[4] Levite, from Ein Harod, who was at the meeting in Bethlehem, told me that Mikhailov behaved well. About thirty Arabs, some of them students and intellectuals, participated in this meeting. It seems, there were also communists among them. One person spoke about the twenty-five years of Soviet rule, remarking, among other things, that though 'for the duration of the war we have declared a truce with imperialism and Zionism, we hope that after the war we will continue in the traditional way'. However, Mikhailov did not show any inclination of continuing the discussion in this manner. On the contrary, he spoke about the fact that this beautiful land was good for the two nations. He had seen the great achievements of the *yishuv*; he mentioned that both Jew and Arab have an historic attachment to the land; there is room in the country for both nations. He spoke strongly against incitement and instigation, saying that the new order in the world would be based on the Atlantic Charter.[5] He ended with an expression of thanks in Arabic and in Hebrew (*toda raba*) to those gathered there. In Bethlehem his speech made a great impression.

Future contacts. In my discussion with the representatives I looked into the possibilities of supplying material from Palestine. It became clear that they do not have anyone in Ankara who can translate from the Hebrew press. The *Palestine Post* is not received in Turkey now, so we agreed that henceforth they will receive daily a copy of the *Palestine Post* in a closed envelope. They [Mikhailov and Petrenko] will ensure that the envelope is handed to them. Apart from this I spoke to them of a bulletin *in Russian* about events and happenings here, which will be sent to them from here. Most likely they will

4. The League for Arab–Jewish Rapprochement and Cooperation was established in 1939. It was composed of veteran members of Brit Shalom – a Jewish political association established in Palestine in 1925 with the aim of seeking Arab–Jewish rapprochement – and left-wing members of the *yishuv*.

5. A declaration of principles resulting from a meeting between Churchill and Roosevelt on 14 August 1941, prior to US entry into the war. It stipulated freely chosen governments, free-trade, freedom of the seas and condemned changes made against the wishes of local populations. The Atlantic Charter served as the basis for the UN Charter of 1945.

not be able to keep their work, nor have the opportunity of passing on even some of our information to the press in Russia. But even if this information reaches only their own ears, and even if only a few Soviet officials in Kuibyshev or Moscow read the bulletin, it will be very worthwhile for us. And I would suggest that we start with such a bulletin in Russian. The matter may entail some additional expenditure for us, but I think that this is a political activity worth pursuing. And, of course, the bulletin will not prevent us from sending material of all types to the Soviet embassy in Ankara.

Y.K.

16
Excerpts from the Diary of Y. Ben-Zvi

COPY: CZA J89/125
Jerusalem, 31 August 1942
Confidential and Secret

THE VISIT OF RUSSIAN DELEGATION MEMBERS SERGEI SERGEEVICH MIKHAILOV, FIRST SECRETARY OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN ANKARA, AND NIKOLAI ANDREEVICH PETRENKO, PRESS ATTACHÉ AT THE EMBASSY

First visit – on Wednesday, 26 August at 8:30 a.m., before I escorted them on a visit to the Old City. I explained to them in general terms the functions of the Vaad Leumi and the structure of Knesset Yisrael,[1] and [provided] information about education, health care, and social welfare.

Mikhailov and Petrenko called on me a second time on Thursday morning, 27 August. Petrenko proceeded to the Jewish Agency and Mikhailov took his leave saying that he was in a hurry to get to Tel Aviv before calling on the high commissioner. I advised him to cancel the trip, for fear that he would be late for his appointment with the high commissioner. He did not agree and left with the intention of going to Tel Aviv, but while we were in Gruenbaum's office he phoned Petrenko to say he had decided to cancel the trip so that he would not be late for the high commissioner.

The third time they both called on me on Friday, and their principal purpose was to speak with me privately.

On this occasion Comrades Mikhailov and Petrenko arrived at 11:30 a.m., accompanied by only one escort. I had meanwhile instructed my staff that I wished to be alone with the two guests, so that I could converse with them

1. Term used for the organized Jewish community in mandatory Palestine. The community elected its assembly (Assefat Hanivharim) and the latter appointed the community's governing body (Vaad Leumi). Religious needs of the community were provided by the chief and local rabbinical councils; local communities elected their own community councils.

without interruption. I was not the only one who was interested in holding this talk; clearly they, too, had sought out the opportunity, and indeed they remarked explicitly to Rachel [Ben-Zvi] and to other comrades how much they appreciated the talk with me. The two of them arrived for the meeting almost exactly at the time we had agreed on, and they spent *about two hours* in my office alone with me. Only afterwards did I call in the other members of the executive who happened to be in the building – Mr. E. Berligne, Dr. A. Katznelson, Mr. A. Elmaleh, and Mr. Shragai.

I told them that there were two or three matters which I wanted to discuss privately with them. Mikhailov replied that this was in fact the reason they were now calling on me and that he, for his part, wanted to brief me on their meeting with the high commissioner.

As I explained in the previous [entry], the two guests were invited to lunch with the high commissioner on Thursday (27 August). Following the meal they stayed for a talk, at which no one else was present, and the [Soviet] *representatives remained with him for about an hour and a half.* Mikhailov speaks English more or less fluently, and Petrenko – French. In any event, they got along without an interpreter in their talk with the high commissioner. M[ikhailov] said that the impression he gleaned from the high commissioner was that even though we (the Jews) did not consider him a friend, he had *good* intentions, he wants our good (the good of the Jews), and he would like to see closer relations between Jews and Arabs.

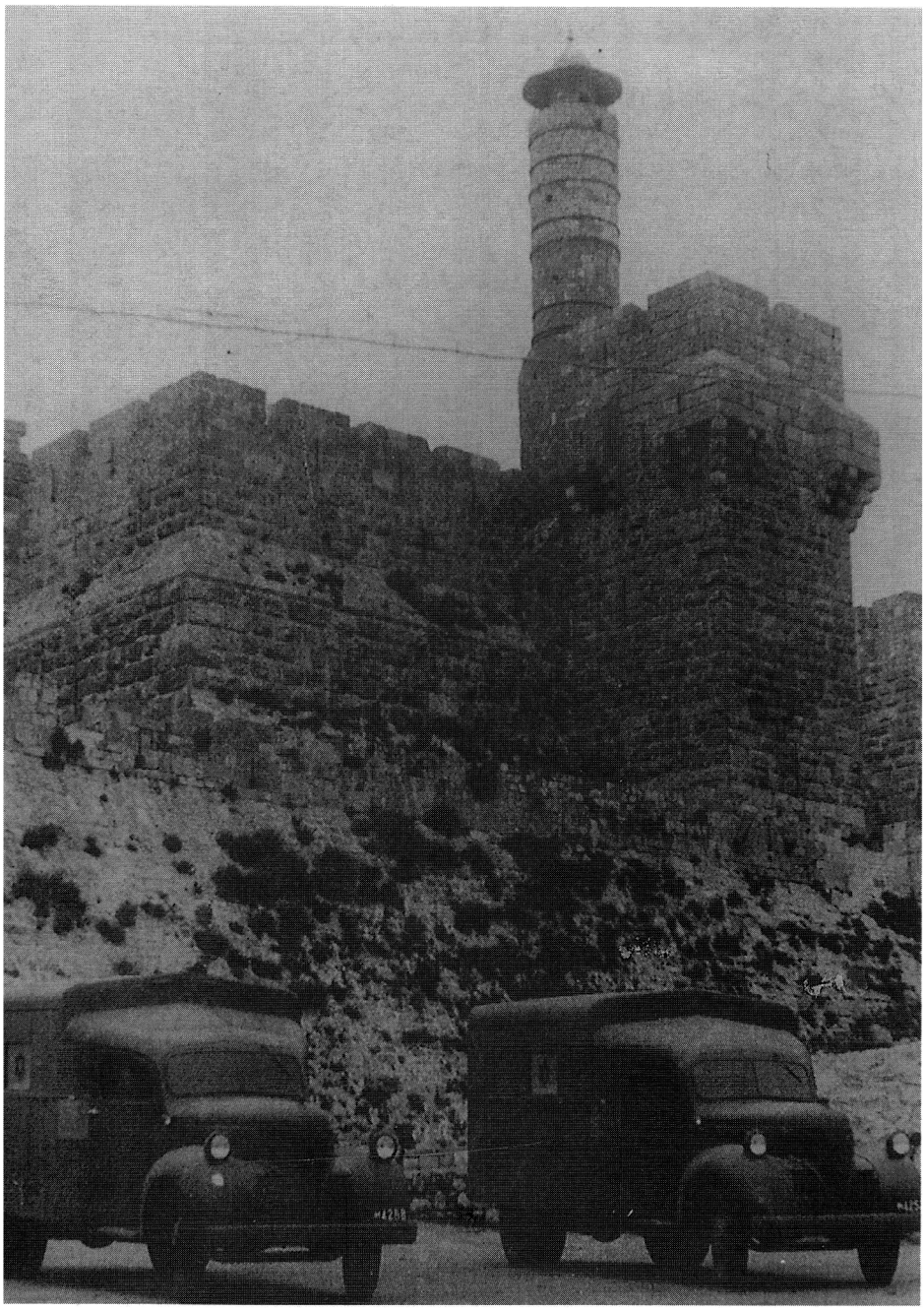
Not wishing to take issue with the Soviet representatives on this point or to get into a discussion of the high commissioner's personality, I made do with a brief comment that the high commissioner was following a particular policy, the policy of the White Paper,[2] which he supports. I took the opportunity to explain briefly the policy of the White Paper, which promised the Arabs heaven and earth and had already produced grave consequences: prohibition of land purchases on the one hand, and a limitation and then a ban on Jewish immigration on the other hand, and also promises to give the Arabs political rule in the near future. I added that everyone favoured understanding with the Arabs, but given the conditions in which the White Paper placed us *it was out of the question* to reach understanding with the Arabs, since the White Paper had placed us at the mercy of the Arab majority in Palestine.

At the outset of the conversation I made the point that the talk was of course private and confidential. Comrade Mikhailov confirmed this but asked permission to make notes. I said I had no objection to notes being made and transmitted to the Soviet government. Petrenko immediately took out pencil and paper and began taking notes of our conversation.

I began with the requests that were contained in the telegram to the head of the Soviet Republic, Kalinin. I had given them a copy (attached to the

2. See Doc. 1, n. 7.

1. Sergei Mikhailov greeting the V League Founding Convention, 25 August 1942 *(Institute for Labour Research in Memory of Pinhas Lavon, Tel Aviv)*

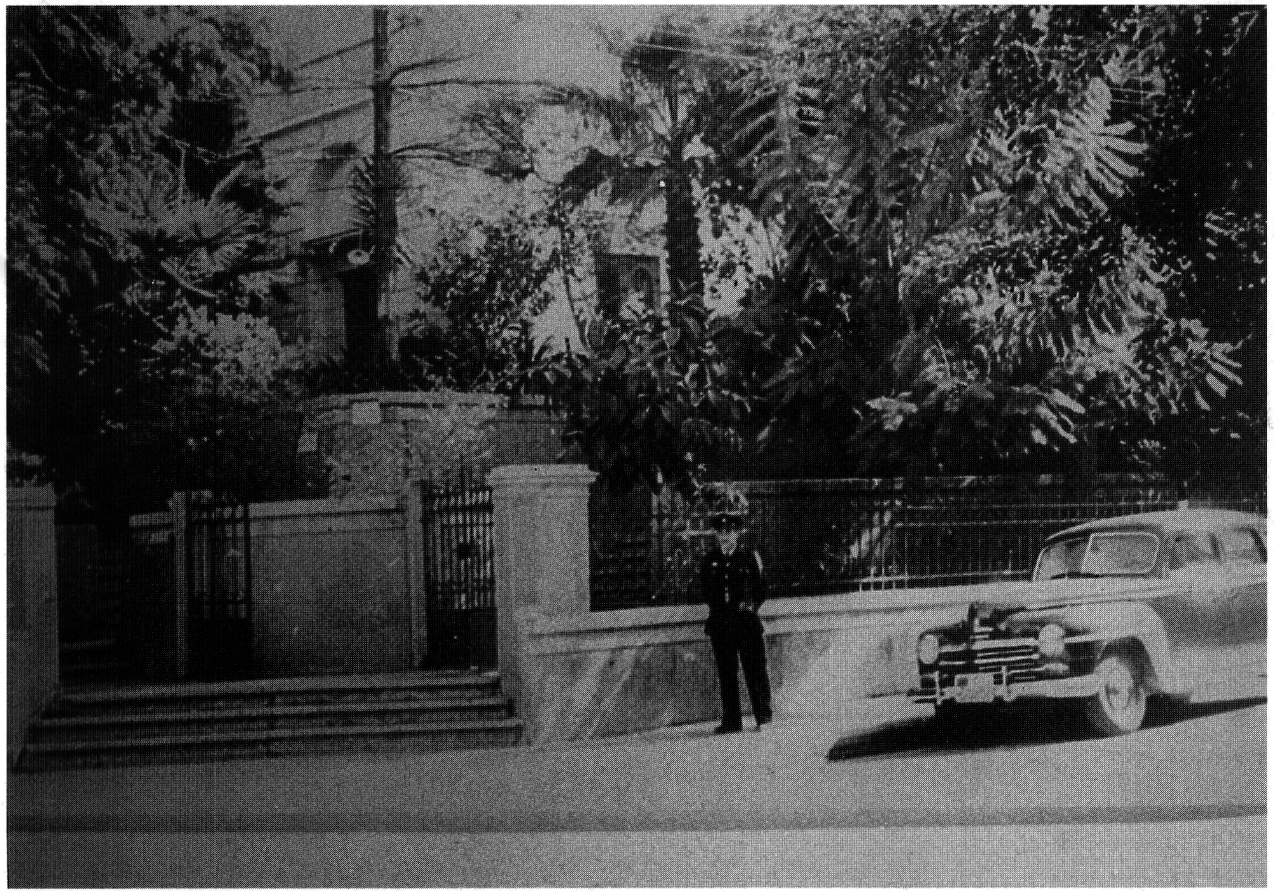


2. Ambulances donated to the Red Army by the V League, photographed below the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem, before being transported to Tehran, 1943 *(Institute for Labour Research in Memory of Pinhas Lavon, Tel Aviv)*

3. Minister-designate of the USSR to Israel, Pavel Ershov, prior to the presentation of his credentials, with Dr. Michael Simon, head of protocol at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 17 August 1948 *(AVP RF)*

6. Departure of the Israeli legation staff to Moscow, 29 August 1948. Far left: Mordecai Namir; fifth from left, Arie Levavi; centre, Moshe Shertok (Sharett); on Shertok's right, Golda Meyerson (Meir) (Hashavua, *4 September 1948, courtesy of Arie Levavi)*

7. Golda Meyerson, Valerian Zorin and Acting Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet I. Vlasov, after the presentation of Meyerson's credentials. 10 September 1948 *(Golda Meir Memorial Association, Tel Aviv)*



8. Premises used by the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv, 1948–53 *(AVP RF)*

9. Israeli delegation to the Third Session of the UN General Assembly in Paris. Seated from left: Moshe Shertok and Abba Eban. Standing third from left: Jacob Robinson, October 1948 *(Abba Eban Centre for Israeli Diplomacy, Hebrew University of Jerusalem)*

10. The Soviet envoy attends a prayer session in the Church of the Holy Trinity, Jerusalem, autumn 1948 *(AVP RF)*

diary)[3] of the telegram during their first visit the day before yesterday. I now reiterated its contents and insisted on our request for the release of 'Prisoners of Zion', whose only sin is that they support Zionism and our work in Palestine. I complained that we had received no confirmation or report concerning this telegram.

I went on to the principal subject: the situation of Jewish refugees from the occupied countries, particularly Polish refugees, who were reported to number about 400,000. We need these refugees. You talk about the additional war effort which is so urgent. There is no need for propaganda, we are all agreed on this. But our forces are few. So far we have contributed about 26,000 people, including 17,000 to the front, 7,000 armed men to the police, which is under the army's supervision, and another 2,000 to the Allied armies. We know that it is possible and essential to increase that number. However, we face another front. We have endured a trying period of attacks by Arabs at the mufti's fascist instigation. We must be vigilant. Nor can we dispense with agriculture and industry. Our human reservoir is limited and small, we need more manpower. It is inconceivable that hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees and emigrants should be lost [to us] when we have an acute need for manpower. You must permit these emigrants to immigrate [to Palestine]. Here we will put them to work in industry and in agriculture, and we will thereby free large forces for the front.

M[ikhailov] asked whether I was referring to Russian citizens. I said that I meant only the refugees from Poland and other occupied countries who were not citizens of Russia; there would be ample time to discuss the immigration to Palestine of Russian citizens after the war. He then asked how I knew for certain that the refugees truly wanted to immigrate to Palestine; perhaps they wished to remain in the Soviet Union. I said that I did not intend to bring a single one of them against his will, but I was certain that the overwhelming majority, if not all, would wish to immigrate to Palestine. He asked further whether we were interested in bringing all of them or only those who were fit to work. I said: It is true that from the egoistical point of view we are interested in a certain age group which is capable of doing any work, but it is inconceivable that we would bring only the men and women of working age and leave the children and the elderly who depend on them. We will have to take not only the workers but their dependents as well. M[ikhailov] once more raised the question about the selection of immigrants, [this time asking] whether we would check on their views. I replied: I will tell you frankly that we have no interest in the immigrants' *opinions* but in their capability to work and live here. We demand discipline and loyalty to our ideal, the building of the Land of Israel as a Jewish homeland, and take no interest in the Jewish immigrants' private opinions and views.

---

3. This document has not been traced.

The second item I raised in this conversation was that of our cultural activity. Already in the previous meeting I had explained to the emissaries what the Hebrew language meant to us and I touched on the essence of Hebrew education, the press, the Hebrew Language Committee,[4] etc. The visit to the National Library made an enormous impression on them, although they admitted that it was brief and hasty, 'telegraphic' in their words. We also spoke about the Hebrew language and its revival when they visited my private home. They were familiar with the name Ben-Yehuda. I showed them the eleven volumes of Ben-Yehuda's dictionary and explained its importance. It should be noted that Mikhailov himself is a philologist, and the dictionary made a great impression on him and his colleague. It seems to me that the revival of the Hebrew language, evidence of which they saw in the form of the huge library and the press, and which they witnessed at public rallies they attended in the cities and in rural settlements, is one of the lasting impressions they gained from their visit. When they referred to Hebrew they did not know the exact word to use. In Russian the term used is 'ancient Hebrew' – *drevne-evreiskii iazyk* – but they sensed that this offended us and in any case was unsuited to the new reality, so they said in jest: Your *old-new* language – '*vash novo-drevne-evreiskii iazyk*'.

During the conversation I asked them whether it was true that there was discrimination against the Hebrew language and its study; and if there was nothing to prevent its study, why were there no dictionaries or new Hebrew textbooks in Soviet Russia, other than the old books which remain from the former period? And was there hope that things would change now, since it was necessary – for the sake of our joint efforts – to enhance the mutual relations between the land of the Soviets and our country, and that Hebrew literature and Hebrew periodicals would be allowed into Soviet Russia?

At this point the guests proceeded to the third subject, which was of particular interest to them, namely, the Arab question. Here it was M[ikhailov] who opened the discussion by asking: Why can you not find a path of compromise to resolve this question? Here he mentioned the high commissioner, who he says would like to strengthen the ties between Jews and Arabs. I explained our position. We want an independent life, an independent economy and the development of our own independent culture. For that we are ready to make great sacrifices. Our major problem as a nation is that of immigration. The White Paper would make immigration conditional on the Arabs' consent. To that we shall never agree. Economically, immigration does not depend on the country's Arabs but on the Jewish people's resilience. To absorb the immigrants we have created special funds which we receive from the Jewish people and not from the country's Arab residents. I explained

4. The Hebrew Language Committee was established in Jerusalem in 1890 in order to promote the use of Hebrew in schools and cultural life in Palestine, and to adapt the language to modern needs.

the character of the Jewish National Fund and Keren Hayesod. I got the feeling that this was all new to them, that they had not known about it before. Therefore, [I added] immigration cannot be dependent on the Arabs from a political viewpoint either.

I said we had no desire to dominate the Arabs, but neither would we agree to be dominated by them. We are half a million, the Arabs are almost a million. This being the case we are already too strong for the Arabs to be able to dominate us.

We are looking for a path of compromise, so that instead of conflict between nations there will be *cooperation between nations*, cooperation like that in Syria between Christian Lebanon and Muslim Syria. I explained the importance of small nations in the Near East: the government of Transjordan where there are fewer inhabitants than there are Jews in the three big cities (Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa); [and] the Republic of Lebanon, where there are slightly more inhabitants than there are Jews in Palestine, but the number of Christians, who rule Lebanon, is less than the Jewish population of Palestine. I also mentioned the Druse and their aspirations; the Alawis; and the Mutawalis, adding: The future of the East lies in [achieving] peace among the small nations, based on recognition of each nation's independence. The future of Palestine in my view involves acknowledgement of the Jewish people's precedence in regard to the questions of immigration and settlement, perhaps in the form of one state with two autonomous *cantons* or *staaten*.

They turned to the issue of Arab labour. Here I could detect already not only traces of their conversation with the high commissioner, but also of the talks they conducted with the Arabs yesterday (Thursday) and this morning (Friday). The principal problem was that of *Arab labour*. M[ikhailov] said: The Arabs complain that you do not employ them. In agriculture there are seasons when they are out of work and they need employment on Jewish farms; you, in turn, need labourers. Why not give them work during those three-month periods? I feel that by employing them you would win their hearts and create powerful ties based on durable common interests. Although I am well aware that this is a clear contradiction of the principles of your kibbutzim[5] (he used the word 'kolkhozes'). But in the first place this is a case of temporary labour, and secondly, it would further the noble goal of establishing peace between two peoples, and to achieve that is it not worthwhile to forgo principles somewhat? I replied that this was a fundamental issue for us and especially for the working class, and it had to be approached from two points of view – principle and practice.

To understand the principle involved, one must learn a little history. You have been a farming nation for many generations, whereas we took up agriculture in this country only two generations ago. Because of this we face

5. Singular: kibbutz – an agricultural settlement based on collective ownership of land and capital, and the sharing of produce and income (see also Doc. 11, Appendix).

tremendous dangers which do not affect you. I explained what a *moshava*[6] looked like forty years ago, when the influx of working pioneers began. At that time there was a danger of degeneration, of Jewish agriculture becoming a case of economy based on foreigners[7] – indeed run by Jewish landlords and overseers, but where all the work was done by non-Jews. At that time we launched our campaign against this dangerous process which was prevalent among our capitalistic farms. It was an uphill battle which enjoyed scant success, hence the idea of an independent workers' farm, collective and cooperative in character. This is the essence of our ethos, though it also derived *from a class-based approach.* The result is that our economy is founded on independent, organized labour, and we cannot under any circumstances agree to exploiting labour, even on a temporary basis.

On the other hand, the problem also admits of a practical approach which is related to *absorbing our immigrants.* Currently there are about a thousand Arab villages in Palestine with a population of approximately 700,000 Arab farmers and nearly 300,000 more urban residents. The fact is that in the entire Arab rural economy there is no place for local Jews, and certainly no place to absorb Jewish immigrants. By the same token, there is no place to absorb Jews in the Arab towns which comprise the majority of the Arab community. Obviously, then, there is no place for Jewish immigrants in the entire Arab sector, which comprises two-thirds of the population and 90 per cent of the land, and *the only sector* which can absorb the new immigrants is the Jewish sector, *agricultural* and *urban* alike. Therefore, if we increase Arab labour and reduce Jewish [labour] in the Jewish sector as well – *how can we dream of absorbing additional Jewish immigrants at all?*

At this point I presented a further analysis of the condition of the Jews in the countries that had been devastated by the Germans, with the object of showing that we would be facing a very severe problem of Jewish emigration from Europe immediately after the war, and I pointed out that America and England and the other democracies are closed to emigration from Europe and that there is no reason to believe that this situation will change after the war.

M[ikhailov] tried to reiterate his arguments that what is most essential is economic and social cooperation with the Arab workers, that this would be most effectively accomplished by employing Arabs on Jewish farms, and that to attain this it is worth forgoing collectivist principles to some degree. I saw that on this question Petrenko's opinion differed from Mikhailov's, since he had expressed his doubts on this point, so I added: We Jews have a particular psychological reason for objecting to the suggested introduction of Arab labour into our kibbutzim. You Russians have always engaged in farming,

---

6. An agricultural settlement in Palestine operating along capitalist lines, employing Jewish and Arab labour.
7. *Sic* in the Hebrew original, but the meaning is apparently a capitalist economy, the use of hired labour and the lease of farmsteads to Arab tenants.

whereas we have just begun. We are fighting against the Diaspora conception that the Jew is the employer and the *goy* [gentile] is the labourer. We ourselves are good enough *goyim* to work by ourselves. If we permit Arab labour on the collective farms, how can we oppose it on private farms? Thus we shall cut off the branch on which we are sitting.

I do not know whether I convinced him on this point. I explained to him that in reality there was place for joint Arab labour in the common economy, such as in the municipalities and the railroads. I related something of my own experience in that profession, and pointed out that in practice there was still much Arab labour on private farms in the *moshavot*, which are based on private property, but there was no Jewish labour on the Arab farms, either large or small.

In the course of the conversation M[ikhailov] expressed his amazement at the Jews' achievements here, saying that this was beyond anyone's dreams. True, they had received fragmentary reports about Jewish activities in Palestine, about the progress in agriculture and technology, but now they saw that they knew nothing about the actual situation. He related that his friend Yugoslavov had visited Palestine some time ago and told him about the Jews' success there. At that time Mikhailov had not paid much attention to his story, but now, during their visit to [Kibbutz] Afikim, he had heard by chance about Yugoslavov's visit there two years ago and remembered being told something about Jewish agriculture. Now they would consider it their duty to relate what they had seen and heard [when they returned to] the Soviet Union.

Lack of time forced us to break off the conversation, though it was not really over; afterwards another four members of the executive who were in the office (Berligne, Katznelson, Elmaleh, and Shragai) came in and a general conversation ensued. But time was pressing, phone calls from Arza[8] urged us and them to hurry because the time for lunch was long past. They left the office at 2 p.m.

The impression I came away with was that the talk had been frank and open. They had been surprised by what they saw; apparently they really had no idea of what was being accomplished here, as the example of Yugoslavov shows. We see, then, that either they *neglected* the informational aspect altogether or – more correctly – that their informants had misled them and they themselves took little interest in the subject.

They comported themselves like diplomats and did not waste words. For this reason – out of extreme caution – the first secretary of the embassy refrained from visiting the Jewish Agency, and only Petrenko, whose position is less important and carries less responsibility, paid it a brief visit. M[ikhailov] made do with sending a *private* visiting card to Gruenbaum. But they had no

8. Guest house at Kibbutz Kiryat Anavim, near Jerusalem, which was popular with the Zionist leadership.

apprehensions concerning the Vaad Leumi, viewing it as a parochial Jewish institution recognition of which is not tantamount to recognition of Zionism.

The visit should be seen as a sort of beginning of new contacts with Soviet Russia. For the first time in modern history representatives of Russia saw tens of thousands of *Jews working and fighting.* They were surprised at this sight, which is so similar to their own situation – the difference being that [here] there is no need for the whip, for government coercion.

For the first time they witnessed the vigour of the resurgent *Hebrew language* – something they did not see among Russian Jews. They were surprised to hear the descriptions of the schools and their development, and that all the money is provided by Jews voluntarily, without coercion of a government apparatus. They were astonished at the sight of the [Hebrew] University and Hadassah [Hospital] and at the intense activity in health care and welfare. They could not but form the opinion – which they expressed frequently in private conversations – that the Jews have prepared the ground here for a *Jewish state.* Hence their attitude of appreciation and great respect towards us. They will undoubtedly convey that attitude to their superiors, perhaps they will also transmit our requests concerning the immigration of Polish and other Jewish refugees, the [Hebrew] language, and perhaps also on easing the persecution of 'Prisoners of Zion'. Moreover, for the first time Soviet representatives stood at attention for the singing of *Hatikva* and to honour the Jewish flag *which is adorned with the Star of David.*

However, we should not ignore the other aspect of this visit. We can assume that their visit is only a first step and a first link, and that upon their return they will inform their superiors not only about what we requested and they promised, but also about matters we did not raise. Undoubtedly they will relate that besides Hebrew, Russian is spoken widely here. Whenever they delivered a speech they were applauded, so, obviously, thousands and tens of thousands of people here know Russian, and therefore it would be to their advantage to introduce extensive Soviet activity [in Palestine] on behalf of their country and their regime. Certainly they may try to open a Russian consulate, and if so, complications could arise, since 'the sons of Korah are not dead'[9] and the Palestine Communist Party is still active, as we saw during the meetings [with the visitors]; treason, subversion and informing are still being carried out on an unprecedented scale against us. For this, too, we must prepare ourselves.

9. A Bibilical figure who led an uprising against the authority of Moses and Aaron (*Numbers*, 16–17).

17
VOKS Society[1] to the League for Soviet Russia (Haifa)

COPY: GARF, F.5283, OP.19, D.104, L.82
Moscow, 26 October 1942

Dear Sirs,

The Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee has informed us of the formation and activity of your esteemed league, and also of your interest in material dealing with the Soviet people's life and struggle.

As the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries [VOKS] we shall be very glad to offer you our full cooperation, and to supply you with all the material which interests you. We are sending you under separate cover two photograph albums and one illustrated newspaper, as well as a number of brochures in Yiddish. We believe that this material will also be of interest to you.

Please confirm the receipt of this material, and let us know your opinion of it.

For our part, we should be most grateful if you would send us information concerning the activity of your league and the cultural life of Palestine.

Awaiting your kind reply, respectfully,

Eastern Department, VOKS

18
Communiqué of the Sovinformburo on the Extermination of the Jewish Population in Europe

Pravda, 19 December 1942

THE NAZI AUTHORITIES' IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR PLAN TO EXTERMINATE THE JEWISH POPULATION OF EUROPE

The People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs has reliable information that the Nazi regime is stepping up its bloody mass violence against the peaceful population of the European countries occupied by the German-fascist invaders. There can be no doubt that the criminal Nazi rulers, faced with imminent destruction and punishment, wish to drown their bestial fear for their own

1. VOKS (*Vsesoiuznoe obshchestvo kul'turnykh sviazei c zagranitsei* – the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries). Established in August 1925, it served as a vehicle for Soviet cultural propaganda and coordinated its activities with the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs.

lives in the blood of innocent people; they see that they are unable to crush the will of the peoples of Europe to regain their independence and freedom and they are therefore putting into effect their savage plan to liquidate a considerable part of the civilian population of the German-occupied countries – wholly innocent people of a variety of nationalities, social positions and religions, and of all ages.

Thus the Nazis and their accomplices are pressing on with the implementation of their special plan for the total annihilation of the Jewish population in the occupied countries of Europe. The existence of such a plan and its rapid realization is confirmed by information from authoritative sources.[1] The Joint Declaration of 18 December of this year about the Nazi authorities' destruction of the Jewish population of Europe is based on such sources.[2] It is signed by the governments of Belgium, Great Britain, Holland, Greece, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Poland, the US, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and the French National Committee. This cannibalistic plan, conceived by Hitler at the beginning of this year, envisages the concentration in Eastern Europe, mainly on Polish territory, of some four million Jews by the end of 1942 in order to exterminate them. The plan affects the overwhelming majority of Jews inhabiting the German-occupied countries of Europe and Germany itself. The transport of these doomed peaceful citizens to Poland, which has become the central fascist slaughterhouse, is almost complete. According to the World Jewish Congress and a number of other public Jewish organizations in Europe and America, as well as the Polish government, the number of Jews killed by the Nazis so far during the implementation of this truly diabolical plan amounts to many hundreds of thousands of men, women and children, of whom about half were brought by the Nazis to Polish territory from Germany, from Germany's vassal states Hungary and Romania, and from European countries occupied by the Nazis – Czechoslovakia, Austria, France, Belgium, Holland and Norway.

---

1. Information relating to Jewish communities in the German-occupied parts of Europe outside the Soviet Union had been transmitted to Maiskii by the World Jewish Congress. Further information regarding Jewish communities in the German occupied regions of the Soviet Union came from the NKVD. In a note to Molotov dated 5 December 1942, Umanskii wrote: 'As it turned out, the NKVD has in its possession very interesting material on the extermination of Jews by the Germans in occupied Soviet territories, as well as in some other countries. This material is more substantiated than that delivered by Jewish organizations to Maiskii. Moreover, it is important that in the forthcoming statement we give *our* information and not just repeat the data of the World Jewish Congress. I have agreed with the NKVD (Comrade Sudoplatov) on the urgent preparation of this material by 16:00 o'clock on 6 December; however, to get this material, it is extremely desirable that you call Comrade Beria' (see K. Umanskii to V. Molotov, 5 December 1942, AVP RF, f.06, op.4., d.67, l.9). On 6 December 1942, Deputy People's Commissar of the Interior Merkulov forwarded to Molotov an 11-page memorandum signed by director of the Fourth Department of the NKVD, Pavel Sudoplatov (AVP, RF f.06, op.4, d.67, ll.11–22).
2. Reference is to the declaration of the Allies on the extermination of the Jewish population in Europe by the Nazis, released on 17 December 1942. It was reprinted in *Pravda* on 18 December 1942.

Recently the German occupying forces in France have begun the forcible mass deportation of French citizens of Jewish nationality from the previously unoccupied zone of France. In Finland, as in other countries subject to Hitler's 'new order', the Jews have been herded into concentration camps. At the end of November and in December of this year the German occupation forces stepped up the forcible transfer of Jewish women, children and elderly people from Norway to Poland, with the same purpose of mass killing. According to information from authoritative Norwegian circles, in the course of just two days – 26 November and 7 December – more than 2,000 Jews were herded onto ships and sent to Germany and then on to Poland. At the signal of a siren, Gestapo agents carried out a raid on Oslo, and drove everyone whom they detained onto ships, without sparing patients in hospitals or old people's homes, separating wives from their husbands and children from their parents. Persons of Jewish nationality are sent *en masse* to Poland from other countries occupied by the Nazis in such conditions of inhuman brutality that many die from hunger or disease on the way.

As can be seen from the information at hand, there is no atrocity to which the Nazi brutes will not resort in order to hasten the process of mass destruction of hundreds of thousands of peaceful citizens. Apart from being shot by machine-gun fire, men, women and children are put to death in specially equipped gas chambers, or by electric current or mass incineration and, in the concentration camps, poisoned with cyanide. The murder of individual deportees is encouraged by the payment of special rewards. In the camps there is a regulation that any prisoner who is ill for more than two days should be killed. Children under 12 are the object of specially organized mass killing. In this bloody orgy of destruction the Nazis temporarily spare only the few who are physically robust and have some special qualifications. These can be of use in German war industries, until they too fall victim to unendurable forced labour

Jews who are brought to Poland from other countries occupied by the Germans are either put into concentration camps or into Jewish ghettos set up by the occupiers. From there thousands are taken to be shot in the vicinity of those towns, or are taken to unknown destinations with the same objective of annihilation.

Some idea of the vast scale of this slaughter may be gained from the following figures for individual Polish towns: At the beginning of the German occupation of Poland, over 400,000 Jews were concentrated in the Warsaw ghetto; in the past three years tens of thousands of Jews were brought from Germany and the occupied countries and sent to this ghetto. However, the killing process has been carried out at such a rate that now the population barely numbers 40,000. Of 32,000 Jews who lived in the town of Radom, 28,500 have been killed; of 20,000 Jews in the town of Piotrkow, only 2,600 are still alive; in the town of Kielce half the population of the ghetto, which had 30,000 inhabitants, were executed and almost all the rest deported, and

their fate is unknown; in the town of Czestochowa only about 2,000 out of 40,000 have survived. Hundreds of thousands of Jews in major European cities have been expelled to Poland, so that in cities such as Vienna and Hamburg their numbers have fallen to a few hundred. The Nazi terror has struck the Polish population too, which despises the occupiers and resists their oppression, suffering enormous losses as a result.

According to the information available, the German government's policy of slaughter has also been applied to Jews called up into the armies of the Nazi puppet states. For instance, interrogation of groups of Hungarian Jews who escaped to the Soviet partisans has revealed the following: by order of the German Command, all Hungarian Jews have been removed from the fighting units of the Hungarian army and transferred to specially created work battalions, in which they labour under German military guards, wearing distinctive badges on their left arms; the Germans subject them to unbelievable degradation, and many die of hunger, disease, exhaustion and beatings. During military actions the Germans compel these men, who were, until recently, members of an 'Allied' army, to precede the German units, so that if the way is mined, the Hungarian Jews are blown up by the mines, and so clear a path for the Nazis.

Information coming from the Soviet territories temporarily seized by the enemy, together with statements of prisoners and deserters, confirms and supplements the above account of the Nazis' bloody massacres of the Jewish population of the occupied countries of Europe. Reports from Minsk, Białystok, Brest, Baranovich and other cities of the Belorussian SSR speak of vicious atrocities inflicted on Jews deported from Central and Eastern Europe. All these reports agree that the Belorussian and Russian peoples, who have been subjected to the cruelest brutalities by the invaders as they ransack and burn Belorussian towns and villages and put their inhabitants to death by the thousands, show remarkable solidarity with the persecuted and tormented Jews. These include the Jews who have been forcibly brought here from the West, whom the inhabitants help in every way within their power, assisting them to escape whenever possible, hiding them in their villages and sharing with them what little food they have.

It has been established that in the Soviet Baltic Republics the Nazi butchers, as they murder tens of thousands of the finest people of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, including citizens of Jewish nationality, also shoot Jews brought to these areas from Germany and countries under German occupation. In Riga, very soon after the invasion, the Nazis shot more than 60,000 Jews, including many brought from Germany. Moreover, the executions were carried out almost continuously in groups of 300–400, who were taken to an island in the western Dvina river, 12 kilometres from Riga, and also on the road from Riga to Daugavpils. Whole families were shot together. Children were torn from their mothers' arms and killed before their eyes, or were thrown alive into pits and ditches dug for the purpose. Not more than 400 Jews are left in Riga now,

living in a ghetto surrounded by barbed wire, to which access is strictly forbidden. In Vilnius, Swinciany and other cities of the Lithuanian SSR, the Jews – both permanent residents and those brought from Germany – have been almost entirely annihilated. Survivors of the massacres hide in the forests, where they live like hunted animals, dressed in rags and dying of hunger and disease. It is known that many Lithuanian peasants, who are themselves severely oppressed by the invaders, find ways to help their Jewish brethren and, so far as their own meagre supplies allow, provide them with food, although they know that help of this kind, as the occupying forces have made clear, is punishable by death.

Reports from France, Norway, Czechoslovakia and Holland show that the population, whatever their nationality, and despite ther suffering from Nazi oppression and violence, nevertheless exhibit the most active sympathy for the Jewish families who are deprived of all human rights, reviled and sent off to slaughter in Poland. A number of neutral countries have also been outraged at this new wave of terror by the Nazi monsters. In Sweden there have been protests over the deportation and massacre of Jews in Norway. The Swedish bishops have issued an appeal in which they protest against Nazi barbarism and call on the people to defend Jews who are condemned to torture and massacre. Reports which reach us from foreign countries bordering on the Soviet Union indicate that even in places where the local population had by various means been indoctrinated with racial prejudice before the invasion of the Nazi hordes, the anti-Semitic brutality of the Germans has not intensified but, on the contrary, has dispelled these prejudices, and has increased solidarity and mutual help among all the victims of Nazi oppression and racial hatred.

The monstrous crimes of the Nazi bandits, rapists and executioners against peaceful Soviet citizens have already been exposed before the entire civilized world. The overwhelming majority of the victims of this orgy of brigandage and murder is made up of Russian, Ukrainian and Belorussian peasants, blue and white collar workers and intellectuals. There have been numerous victims among the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian peoples, among Moldavians and the inhabitants of the Karelo-Finnish Republic. Although the Jewish minority in the Soviet population is a small one, it is united with all the nationalities of the Soviet Union by its burning devotion to the motherland, and has suffered particularly severely from the savage bloodthirstiness of the degenerate Nazis.

The Nazi occupying forces have recently intensified their bloody regime of mass murder, punitive expeditions and the burning of villages. They have sent hundreds of thousands of peaceful inhabitants to Germany as slaves, not to mention the relentless looting and violence inflicted on the population of the temporarily occupied areas. There is evidence to show that with this mad outburst of terror, the Nazis are carrying out their plan of total extermination of the Jewish citizens of the Soviet Union as well.

The intensified campaign of terror against the Ukrainian peasantry has been marked by a number of bloody antisemitic pogroms in parts of the Ukrainian

SSR. In the space of only two days – 26 and 27 August – German fascists organized bloody massacres in the following towns: in Lupka 20,000 Jews, who had been assembled on the pretext of re-registration, were shot; in Sarny, where in the spring of this year 18,000 Jews had been put to death at the same time as thousands of Ukrainians and Russians, 14,000 Jews were brought in from surrounding settlements and villages and killed on 26 August; and on the same two days 850 Ukrainians and 1,600 Jews were shot in Rokitno, 1,250 in Berezno, 1,400 in Kostopole and 1,500 in Zdolbunowo. A few old men, women and children who escaped these massacres are wandering in the forests, in tattered clothing, barefoot and hungry, hoping to meet some partisan detachments. The suffering and death of the Jews – old men, women and children – who were shot by Nazi demons in Kiev and Dnepropetrovsk will never be forgotten: in these two towns alone more than 60,000 people were put to death in the first months of the German occupation.

All these facts go to show that the Nazi monsters do not hesitate to carry out the bloodiest of crimes, implementing over and over again Hitler's repeatedly stated intention to exterminate the Jewish population in the countries of Europe under German fascist occupation.

By committing such atrocities against the Jews, and utilizing their fanatic antisemitic propaganda, the Nazis are trying to divert the attention of the German people from the catastrophe which looms nearer and more visibly over fascist Germany. Only the desperadoes in Hitler's gang, condemned as they are to destruction, could have had the idea that they could drown their countless crimes against the peoples of Europe, plunged into war by insatiable German imperialism, in the blood of many hundreds of thousands of entirely innocent Jews. But this merely strengthens the determination of the freedom-loving peoples to hasten the defeat and destruction of the Nazi state, the Nazi army and the Nazi ruling clique, and thereby to put an end to the bloody orgy of the Nazi butchers and murderers, and to free the peoples of Europe once and for all from the threat of slavery and destruction.

The punitive hand of those peoples who throw off the yoke of the German-fascist invaders will be heavy. Their vengeance will reach both the ruling Nazi clique and the despicable individuals who carry out their criminal and bloody orders.

Informburo of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs

19
A.Ia. Vyshinskii to V.M. Molotov (Moscow)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.07, OP.3, P.19, D.13, LL.147–9
[Moscow] 23 December 1942

RECEPTION OF POLISH AMBASSADOR ROMER
AND FIRST SECRETARY FREYD

[...][1]
[Romer] then said that, speaking in a private capacity, he wanted to clarify the question of persons with, as he put it, disputed citizenship.[2] The point is that these people (he means the Jews) are experiencing great difficulties because the question of their citizenship is allegedly unclear. In Romer's opinion we should leave aside the question of principle and find some practical solution, such as allowing some Jews who have families abroad (for example in the US) to emigrate there. He has information that our ambassadors in America and England – Litvinov and Maiskii – are said to have given some Jewish organizations assurances about the possible emigration of a group of rabbis.[3] Romer would like to know how accurate this report is. He supposes that, now that all the Allied governments have joined in condemning the German atrocities against the Jewish population,[4] it would be a good opportunity to emphasize the enormous difference between the attitude to the Jews in Germany and in the Allied states.

I said that since the ambassador was asking me this question unofficially, I would answer him in the same way. As the ambassador knew, all Soviet citizens who wish to go abroad have to apply to the Visa and Registration Department,[5] which decides the question of their emigration on the basis of existing laws. There could, of course, be no exceptions for rabbis who were Soviet citizens. As for the promises made by Litvinov and Maiskii, I very much doubted whether they had, in fact, made such promises. On the contrary, I was convinced that they had made no such promises.

---

1. The first part of the document, dealing with the repatriation of Polish children in the USSR, has been omitted.
2. See 'Memorandum of the Polish embassy in the USSR relating to the restrictions of the rights of Polish Jewish citizens, imposed by the Soviet government', 11 August 1942 (*Documents on Polish–Soviet Relations 1939–1945*, Vol. 2, pp. 679–87).
3. On 22 September 1942, Maiskii sent a letter to the chief rabbi of Great Britain, Dr. J.H. Hertz, informing him that 'the Soviet government has provided the rabbis who have so far been identified with the necessary exit permits. They can only make use of these permits if your people will make all arrangements for them to travel through the other countries *en route* to Palestine. As soon as these transit facilities are arranged, let me know and I will do my best to expedite their departure from the Soviet Union' (CZA S25/487).
4. See Doc. 18 and n. 2 there.
5. OVIR – department of the People's Commissariat of the Interior (NKVD).

I answered Romer's remark about the obscurities supposedly to be found in the case of citizenship of persons who were not of Polish origin. I said that the issue was absolutely clear. It had been settled by the Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of 29 November 1939, of which the Polish Embassy had been informed in our note of 1 December 1941.[6] Romer tried quite persistently to dispute our point of view, and said that the Polish government did not agree with it. I answered by saying that we had decided the question of citizenship, raised by Romer in an unofficial capacity, on the basis of our laws, in which the matter is absolutely clear .

I went on to say that I saw no logic in Romer's statement that a favourable solution of the problem of the rabbis' emigration would emphasize the special position of the Jews in freedom-loving countries. I could not understand the connection between these two matters.

In reply Romer said that with regard to making a favourable impression abroad he had in mind only the reunification of the rabbis with their families and the possibility for them to work 'in normal conditions', i.e., as rabbis. Romer remarked, among other things, that the Soviet authorities, while apparently, not regarding the Jews as Polish citizens, did not consider them as Soviet citizens either.

I questioned Romer's statement and said that I knew of no cases in which the Soviet authorities had been uncertain how to define anyone's citizenship or did not recognize such persons as Soviet citizens.

Romer again emphasized that he had asked the question in a private capacity. He could now see that the reports of Maiskii's and Litvinov's assurances were inaccurate.

In conclusion, Romer said that while he was away the chargé d'affaires would be Zawadowski, to whom he asked us to render all necessary cooperation in the performance of his duties. I promised to do this.

The conversation lasted two hours.

Comrade Novikov was present at the meeting.[7]

A. Vyshinskii

---

6. On 10 November 1941, the Polish embassy in the USSR addressed the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs concerning the conscription by the Red Army of Polish citizens of Ukrainian, Belorussian and Jewish origin. The reply followed in a note dated 1 December 1941 (for the text, see *Documents on Polish–Soviet Relations 1939–1945*, Vol. 1, pp. 227–8).
7. Copies sent to Molotov, Dekanozov, Lozovskii, General Secretariat and Fourth European Department.

20
M. Shertok to I.M. Maiskii (London)

COPY: CZA Z4/14920
[London] 19 January 1943

Your Excellency,

Pursuant to our conversation on January 13th,[1] I beg to set out in writing the representations I then made.

The Palestinian Jewish Community is fully harnessed to the war effort. Of the total number of 500,000 Jews who live in Palestine today, 30,000 have voluntarily joined the armed services; about 20,000 are employed by the army as civilians; another 20,000 work on army contracts in factories (apart from a similar number of factory workers engaged in satisfying the needs of the population). Many thousands of those working on the land are engaged in growing food for the army. Jewish workers and artisans are in great demand for urgent war work in the surrounding territories, and many hundreds of Jews are now working in the oil refineries of Abadan in the south of Persia, on military construction works in Iraq, on bridge and road building in Syria, in airways workshops in Eritrea, etc.

For many months past, the shortage of manpower for direct war needs has been increasingly felt, and the Administration of Palestine is today prepared to admit considerable numbers of immigrants, provided suitable men can be found and transported to Palestine.

It is believed that among the large contingent of Jewish refugees from Poland who are today in the USSR, there are many who, in view of the natural difficulty of integrating newcomers into the economic life of the country under war conditions, are not utilised, or not fully utilised, in the Soviet war effort. It is assumed that among these people there are many who could be of distinct use to the common war effort if brought to Palestine. This applies not only to skilled men, but also to unskilled; the latter could easily be absorbed in farming – where today shortage of labour leads to inordinate lengthening of the working day and to the curtailment of production – as well as of various military works; they would also be valuable as recruits into the Jewish units of the British army.[2]

The proposal of the Jewish Agency for Palestine would be that, if the Soviet government agreed in principle to let out a certain number of Polish Jews – say between 3,000 and 5,000, both men and women – a list of names should be presented through the British embassy in Moscow for the consideration and approval of the Soviet authorities.

---

1. For more details on this meeting see Doc. 24.
2. Approximately 26,000 Palestinian Jews volunteered for service in the British Army, particularly the East Kent Regiment, three companies of which became the Palestine Regiment. The Jewish Brigade was formed in September 1944. It numbered about 5,000 men and saw service in Egypt, the North Italian front and north-west Europe.

There is among the Jews of Palestine a deep and widespread sympathy and admiration for the Soviet Union in its heroic struggle. The Jews of Palestine are keenly conscious of the fact that, in their humble capacity, they are making a contribution to the common war effort in which the Soviet Union plays such a major part. In these circumstances, the consent of the Soviet government to enable a certain limited number of Jews from Poland, who are now in the USSR, to reinforce the Palestinian Jewish war effort, would be greatly welcomed by the Palestinian Jews as a gesture of goodwill and a token of encouragement.

In addition to adult refugees, Palestinian Jewry would be most happy to be able to take in refugee children, a great many of whom must have lost their parents in the course of their wanderings, and whose upbringing and education must no doubt present a special problem. The proposal under this head[ing] would be that the Soviet government should authorize the exit of a certain number of Polish Jewish children, particularly orphans, and should inform the British embassy in Moscow and ourselves of this decision, so that the necessary steps may be taken for their transportation.

I should like to make it clear that I am putting forward these proposals on behalf of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, whose headquarters is in Jerusalem, and which has a permanent office in London. I am the official representative of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, and my chief function in the war period has been the organization of the Palestinian Jewish war effort.[3] As you are no doubt aware, the Jewish Agency is the body established under Article 4 of the Palestine Mandate to advise and cooperate with the Administration of Palestine in all matters concerning Jewish interests in that country.

I have the honour to remain, Your Excellency's obedient Servant,

M.S.

21
S.A. Lozovskii to V.M. Molotov and A.S. Shcherbakov (Kuibyshev)

COPY: AVP RF, F.07, OP.4, P.29, D.30, L.7.
Kuibyshev, 10 March 1943
Secret

The following telegram from New York has reached us in Kuibyshev: Kuibyshev, Sovinformburo, to Mikhoels and Fefer:[1]

Doc. 20
3. See Doc. 5, n. 3.

Doc. 21
1. Solomon Mikhoels, chairman of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee and Itsik Fefer, member of the committee presidium. The Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee was subordinated to the Soviet

We are convinced of the need for you to come to the US and tour the country, and we urge you to do so. The Jewish Council for Russian War Relief could collect enormous sums of money, and could help to unite the Jewish people.

Jewish Council of the Fund for Aid to Russia

Apparently this telegram is the result of the report given by Comrade Litvinov to this Jewish council as instructed by Moscow. It would be a very bad thing if, after all these conversations and telegrams,[2] the matter dragged on or the trip was postponed. It is clear from the telegram that the Jewish organizations want to do something. The visit by Mikhoels and Fefer could be useful.

In this connection I propose that Comrades Mikhoels and Fefer make an official visit of 3–4 months[3] to the US, with Comrade A.S. Shcherbakov and myself responsible for drawing up the brief for this delegation of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.[4]

Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs
S. Lozovskii

22
Excerpts from the Diary of E. Epstein

COPY: CZA S25/84
16 March 1943
Top Secret

SECOND VISIT TO SOVIET EMBASSY

Accompanied E[liezer] Kaplan on his visit to Mikhailov. E[liezer] K[aplan] raised the issue of Jewish refugees from Poland who are in the Soviet Union and explained our wish to bring to Palestine those among them who are not

---

(cont.) Information Bureau (Sovinformburo), headed by AUCP(b) Central Committee Secretary Aleksandr Shcherbakov.

The possibility of sending a Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee delegation to the US was initially raised with Litvinov by Albert Einstein, honorary chairman of the American Committee of Jewish Writers, Artists and Scientists, and the official invitation was issued jointly by that organization and the Jewish Council for Russian War Relief. Nahum Goldmann was instrumental in preparing the visit.

2. During 1942, the Soviet embassy in the US reported to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs several times that American Jewish organizations were inviting a delegation of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee to visit the US. Lozovskii consulted Shcherbakov on the matter; however, the latter recommended that the visit be postponed. In early 1943, another invitation arrived, and this time Lozovskii and Shcherbakov selected Mikhoels and Fefer as members of the delegation, and the AUCP(b) Central Committee approved the choice. The decision was transmitted to the Soviet embassy in Washington, and the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee informed the Americans of the forthcoming visit. See Lozovskii's testimony at the trial of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in 1952. *Nepravednyi sud. Poslednii stalinskii rasstrel*, pp. 169–70.
3. Corrected in the margin by hand: '2–3 months'.
4. At the top left of the document, the following is typed: 'Comrade Shcherbakov. I agree (with the correction) for 2–3 months. [Signed by hand] V. Molotov.' Copies of this document went to Vyshinskii, Dekanozov, Lozovskii and Saksin.

needed for the Soviet government's war effort.[1] In the first place, we want to take out the children, who are not of any use to the Russians, and by removing them we can ease the Soviet government's concerns about feeding the refugees. If it turns out to be impossible to evacuate refugees – children and elderly from the Soviet Union – we shall then request permission to send one or two people to Russia in order to clarify their needs so that we can assist them from Palestine.

Afterwards E. K[aplan] proposed that a company be established to develop trade relations between Palestine and the Soviet Union. Such a company might have significant prospects even after the war.

At the end of the conversation, E. K[aplan] outlined his plan to transport new immigrants from the Balkans by sea and asked how certain we could be that these ships would not be attacked by Russian submarines.[2]

Mikhailov, who received us very courteously, heard out E. K[aplan] quite attentively, but, in the manner of Soviet representatives, responded with only a few words and comments to Kaplan's requests: 'Interesting', 'Important', 'I shall convey it to the appropriate authorities', etc. As for safeguarding immigrant ships from Russian submarines, he said we could be certain that they would suffer no harm by the Russian Navy.

E. K[aplan] gave him a memorandum on the subjects he had raised in the conversation, and Mikhailov promised to convey it to his government.

Before we left, Mikhailov asked us to give his regards to all his friends in Palestine and to the V League. Upon returning to the hotel, we each received a gift from Mikhailov: a book published in the Soviet Union.

* * *

Wednesday, 17 March

I met in the hotel with TASS representative Valuiskii, who introduced me to Anatolii Kulazhenkov, the new first secretary of the Soviet embassy in charge of press affairs. Kulazhenkov knew about our visit to Mikhailov and showed interest in the development of cultural ties between Palestine and the Soviet Union. He promised to send us some of the literary material he receives from Russia, which is difficult to obtain by other means.

1. See Doc. 20.
2. On 24 February 1943 the immigrant ship *Struma* sailed from Romania headed for Palestine and was sunk off the Turkish coast after having been harassed and denied shelter by the Turkish authorities. Jewish Agency officials suspected that the ship had been sunk by Soviet submarines.

23
Meeting: M. Shertok and N. Goldmann – M. Litvinov (Washington, 24 March 1943)

COPY: CZA A245/507

Present: Mr. Litvinov, Dr. Goldmann, Mr. Shertok

I had previously requested an appointment for Mr. Shertok and myself, but had been told by the ambassador's secretary that he was very busy and that whatever Mr. Shertok had to tell him should be put in writing. I followed this conversation up by letter and got an appointment.[1]

Mr. Shertok had been unavoidably detained and arrived late. I asked Mr. Litvinov why for the first time in the many years of our acquaintance, it had been difficult to secure an appointment and asked bluntly whether he thought we were tied up with the protest against the shooting of Alter and Ehrlich.[2] I assured him jestingly that it was an insult to my intelligence for him to believe that I would be tied up with such anti-Soviet propaganda. At this Mr. Litvinov laughed, got up and bowed, saying that in all our future relations he would never again commit the sin of under-rating my intelligence.

We then talked seriously. I told him that I and most of my friends regret the shooting of Alter and Ehrlich, without passing any judgement on the trial, because in principle we are against shooting, but we do not regard the matter as a Jewish problem. We regard the whole matter of the announcement of the Bund that 'the Jewish people would never forget this', as misguided. It would, in any case, be an issue between socialists and communists, or between Poles and Russians, but it has nothing to do with the Jewish people, for, whatever the reasons for their being shot, it was certainly not because they were Jews. Neither the Zionist Organization nor the World Jewish Congress participated in any demonstrations although pressure was brought to bear on them. I told Mr. Litvinov that the Bund was as violently anti-Zionist as it was anti-communist.

Mr. Litvinov noted this with satisfaction, and his mood, which had been cool and stiff, changed completely, and he was more friendly and sympathetic than he had been on any previous occasion.

Mr. Shertok arrived. He gave Litvinov a report on Palestine in wartime, on the contribution of the *yishuv* to the war effort and the special contribution to the aid of Russia.

---

1. The report was apparently written by Goldmann.
2. Wiktor Alter and Henryk Ehrlich, prominent leaders of the Polish-Jewish socialist Bund, fled to the Soviet Union after the beginning of the war, where they were imprisoned. After the German invasion of the USSR they were released and for a while cooperated with the Soviet authorities but were imprisoned once again in December 1941. Ehrlich committed suicide in prison in May 1942 and Alter was shot on 17 February 1943. Their deaths were formally acknowledged by the USSR in February 1943 (see Redlich, *War, Holocaust and Stalinism*, p. 74).

Mr. Litvinov listened most attentively and asked what the Arabs had done in comparison with the Jews. After Mr. Shertok had given him the facts and figures, he said: 'You should do everything possible to bring this to the attention of America.'

He asked whether we had come to any understanding with Britain and the State Department about postwar plans for Palestine and whether the British were still courting the Arabs.

We told him about our talks with the State Department[3] and informed him that the British were not yet prepared to discuss our problems with us.

24
Shertok's Report to the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Labour Federation (Histadrut) (Tel Aviv, 29 April 1943)

MINUTES: CZA S25/858

I made two points in the conversation with Maiskii:[1] (a) We are convinced that a great many Jews among the refugees, who could be utilized for the war effort, can not be used in your war effort because they are refugees who have not been economically absorbed and are congregating in the cities. However, we have experience in absorbing such Jews; we will absorb them, they will work in agriculture and industry, will be mobilized into army service, and will participate actively in the war. (b) But, I said, there is something else: there is the problem of relations. There are no relations between us – and we are not to blame for that. In Palestine there is tremendous enthusiasm for the war you are waging, your steadfastness, which is shared by all circles. We have a large population of labourers. They are the very backbone of the *yishuv*. They do not agree with you on every political and social issue. They are independent: they have their own causes, their own policy, and they choose their path in accordance with their needs and their understanding. But they have immense esteem for the enterprise you are building, and despite all the differences, they see themselves as belonging to the same human camp as you. And there is a more general matter: Palestine is small and we are few in number, but we are Palestine, we are the future of Palestine. We are not so far removed from you, and perhaps in the future there will be ties, relations and common interests.

Doc. 23

3. On 3 March 1943, Chaim Weizmann, Moshe Shertok, Nahum Goldmann and Louis Lipsky met with members of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs at the Department of State (see memorandum of conversation 'Presentation of Views of Zionist Leaders Regarding the Future Status of Palestine', in Cohen, *Palestine and Arab Federation 1938–1945*, pp. 181–8).

Doc. 24

1. The meeting took place on 13 January 1943 (see Doc. 20).

We believe that you can afford to make a gesture of good will towards the *yishuv*. The *yishuv* stands shoulder-to-shoulder with you in the war, it is an ally. (I briefed him on the mobilization and on our war effort in general. I did this also to support my first point: the shortage of Jewish working hands, the tension in the agricultural sector, in mobilization). And when I say a gesture of good will, I do not mean talk or a declaration, but deeds: to release a number of Jews for Palestine – three thousand, two thousand, one thousand. He showed some interest in the subject and asked how the people would be selected. I thought to myself: Would that we were already at that stage. To him I said: The best thing would be for us to send an expert to assist you.

Maiskii made no response to this; he requested only that we submit a memorandum, which he promised to convey to his government. He said: You can't expect me to reply extemporaneously, 'on the spot'. I said I would be pleased to put it in writing.

Towards the end of the conversation the ice began to thaw a little. He escorted me to the door, where he suddenly asked: 'How are things there?' I said: 'Not so bad...' I showed no great inclination to get into propagandizing... He asked: 'Do you have an army?' – 'What kind of army do you mean?' – 'A Jewish army!' I said: 'No, we do not have a Jewish army.' He wanted to know why. I said: 'Because of political prejudice', and I looked him in the eye so that he would take the hint – that political prejudice is not confined to England alone... I told him that there are Jewish units in the British army – and I explained what 'Jewish units' mean: a Jewish feeling inside, and so forth – but neither [recognized] status nor the concentration [of forces], and that is what we are fighting for. He asked what our demands were. I told him that the minimum we want is the concentration of these companies into one large Jewish military unit and that on this subject I had spoken with the secretary of state for war.[2] 'Were you successful?' he asked. I replied: 'The secretary of state for war [said]: "You can't expect me to reply extemporaneously, on the spot – send me a written memorandum on the subject..."'

25
P.S. Atroshchenkov and A. Zhegalova to V.G. Dekanozov (Kuibyshev)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.6, P.3, D.1, L.4
[Kuibyshev] 15 May 1943

In connection with Comrade Ivanov's inquiry about the registration of Soviet citizens in Palestine, we consider it necessary to state the following:

In October 1941 the ambassador of the USSR in Turkey, Comrade Vinogradov, put forward (in his telegram of 4 October) a proposal that we should open a consulate in Palestine. In your telegram of 14 October 1941 you

2. Sir P.J. Grigg, British secretary of state for war, February 1942–May 1945.

answered that it would be to our disadvantage to take the initiative in this since the British could ask to open consulates in Baku or Vladivostok; in the same telegram Vinogradov was instructed to apply to the British ambassador Knatchbull Hugessen for permission for a member of the consulate to visit Palestine.[1] In December 1941 Hugessen gave a positive response to this request, but on additional instructions from Narkomindel the visit to Palestine was postponed and has still not taken place (unless you count the trip by Comrades Mikhailov and Petrenko in August 1942 at the invitation of the Jewish V League).[2]

It is our view that the consular department of Narkomindel should raise this question with the British embassy. In discussion with the British, we should, when handing over our *aide-mémoire,* remind them of our previous application, pointing out that the permission then granted could not be acted upon for technical reasons.

A draft *aide-mémoire* is attached.[3]

P. Atroshchenkov
A. Zhegalova

26
S.A. Lozovskii to V.M. Molotov (Kuibyshev)

COPY: AVP RF, F.07, OP.4, P.29, D.30, LL.2–5
[Kuibyshev] 22 May 1943
Secret

Comrade V.M. Molotov,

I attach a draft directive to the delegates of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee Mikhoels and Fefer.[1] This draft directive is in response to the inquiry from our consul-general in New York, Comrade Kiselev, as to how the delegates should behave towards the Zionists.

Doc. 25

1. See Doc. 10.
2. See Docs. 15, 16.
3. In the *aide-mémoire* the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs asked the embassy of Great Britain to facilitate the receipt of permission to enter Palestine for a group of Soviet consular officials who would deal with citizenship matters for the approximately 400 Soviet citizens living there. On 14 July 1943, the British ambassador in Turkey, Sir Hugh Knatchbull Hugessen, cabled the high commissioner for Palestine, Sir Harold MacMichael, regarding the request of the Soviet embassy in Ankara, to send a consular official on a short visit to Palestine. A Foreign Office memorandum of 18 July 1943 stated that it had no objection to the visit, but added 'there can be no question of a permanent Soviet consular representative in a British colony until we are allowed to have British consuls in Russia, which is not the case at present' (PRO, FO 371/35046).

Doc. 26

1. Mikhoels and Fefer were due to arrive in mid-June 1943. They were to visit major Jewish centres in the US, Mexico, Canada and Great Britain.

Since Mikhoels and Fefer will have to encounter various organizations and groups, including anti-Soviet groups, I thought that they should be given directives about this.

Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs
S. Lozovskii

APPENDIX

Draft Instructions to the Delegates of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee Comrades Mikhoels and Fefer

I attach instructions for Mikhoels and Fefer on how they should conduct themselves during their stay in the US.

Mikhoels and Fefer are being sent to the US by the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee at the invitation of the Jewish [Council] for Russian War Relief and are the guests of this organization. They are representatives of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee and not of the Soviet government. The aim of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee delegation is to establish cooperation between Soviet and American Jews (excluding anti-Soviet groups) on the basis of the common struggle against Nazi Germany and its vassal states, and to promote a campaign of assistance to the Red Army. The delegates have no other authority or tasks. This is to determine their behaviour and attitude to various Jewish organizations which are at odds with each other. Whether Zionist organizations should take part in an expanded committee[2] and attend all the public meetings in the country, and on what conditions, is a matter for the American Jewish organizations. As representatives of Soviet Jews, arriving as the guests of American Jews, the delegates must try to ensure that both Soviet and American flags are displayed at the meeting. The question of the flag and of the Zionists' hymn, and also whether the 'Jewish State of Free Palestine' should be mentioned in the resolution, should be decided by the American Jewish organization which invited Mikhoels and Fefer to the US.

The Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee delegates must on no account interfere in the internal affairs of the US, nor in the struggle between different Jewish organizations; nor must they express any views on international politics, such as the question of the Jewish State of Free Palestine, since Palestine is, of course, a British-mandated territory.

As for those Jewish groups that attack the USSR, Mikhoels and Fefer must refuse to have any contact or discussion with them or to take part in any meetings or demonstrations etc. which they organize.

---

2. Reference is to the committee for the reception of the Soviet delegation, comprising representatives of various American Jewish organizations.

In discussions with the representatives of organizations such as Joint,[3] Ambijan,[4] the Jewish Aid Fund etc., they must not undertake any obligations without first asking Narkomindel through the embassy, and they must tell the initiators of these proposals that their projects and suggestions will be passed on to the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.

If the Polish[5] and Jewish enemies of the Soviet Union try to raise at some meeting the case of Alter and Ehrlich,[6] M[ikhoels] and F[efer] must speak firmly in defence of the policy of the Soviet Union, saying that the destruction of the fifth column, whatever the nationality of its members, is a necessary prerequisite for the defeat of Nazi Germany.

In their public statements they must not limit themselves to Jewish concerns, but must speak of the friendship of the peoples in the USSR, of how they all compete to struggle against Hitler, of the heroism of the Red Army, and so forth.

The embassy and the consulate must cooperate fully with the delegates in the course of their stay.

The contents of this telegram are to be made known to Mikhoels and Fefer.

27
N. Goldmann to E. Beneš

COPY: CZA Z5/1377
[New York] 27 May 1943

Dear President Beneš,

I am enclosing the memorandum on Soviet Russia and Zionism which you asked me to prepare for you.[1] I have tried to outline the main reasons for the

---

Doc. 26

3. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the largest American Jewish overseas relief organization.
4. The American committee for the settlement of Jews in Birobidzhan, established in the mid-1930s.
5. On 25 April 1943, Molotov handed the Polish ambassador in the USSR, Romer, a note informing him that Moscow was severing relations with the Polish government (*Documents on Polish–Russian Relations*, Vol. 1, p. 533). Lozovskii apparently presumed that the Polish government-in-exile would try to invite US citizens of Polish origin to take advantage of the visit of Mikhoels and Fefer to create an anti-Soviet atmosphere.
6. See Doc. 23 and n. 2 there.

Doc. 27

1. Eduard Beneš, president of the Czechoslovak Republic in Exile, was about to depart to Moscow for political talks with the Soviet leadership. His departure was evidently postponed to the end of the year and the Zionists repeated their approach then (see Weizmann to Beneš, 12 November 1943, WA). The official records of Beneš' meetings and conversations in Moscow in the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs do not disclose whether the Zionist or Palestine question was raised by Beneš (cf., however, Doc. 37, according to which, Beneš reported to Zionist leaders on his Moscow talks).

difficulties which have existed between us and the Russian government hitherto and the reasons for a new and positive relationship now. I have also indicated briefly a few of the concrete questions which have been under discussion between ourselves and representatives of that government in the last two years.

I enclose further, in the hope that you may find it helpful, a pamphlet by Mr. David Ben-Gurion, chairman of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, on present-day Zionist aims; and also a copy of the memorandum submitted by us a few months ago to the State Department containing a statement of our political demands.

I need not tell you how deeply encouraged we are by your sympathy and how grateful to you for your readiness to discuss our problems with the Soviet Russian authorities. If there is anyone who may be able to bring about a change in this matter of our relations with them – a matter of such potential importance for the future of the Zionist movement – it is yourself.

Needless to say we are at your disposal for any further material which you may require.

It was a great pleasure to have seen you and, on behalf of Dr. Weizmann and myself, I offer you our every good wish in your important 'mission to Moscow'. May I ask you to let us know through our friends in London the result of this mission insofar as it concerns our matters. By the time you are back, Dr. Weizmann will be in London, and I am sure you will communicate with him there. I too hope that I may meet with you again in London in the autumn.

Sincerely yours,

Nahum Goldmann

MEMORANDUM ON ZIONIST RELATIONS WITH SOVIET RUSSIA

I. Basis of Russian Hostility to Zionism in the Past.

The antagonism shown by the USSR to Zionism in the course of the past two decades, which expressed itself in the arrest of many Zionists in Russia, in the suppression of Hebrew literature there and in the anti-Zionist attitude of the communist organizations all over the world, derived from two main causes:

(i) In part it was a survival of the internal ideological struggle which had been waged within the Jewry of tsarist Russia for supremacy in Jewish life there between the Zionists, who saw the ultimate solution of the Jewish problem in terms of a Jewish Palestine, and the Jewish communists, who argued that the only solution was a world revolution;

(ii) In part it was a reflection of the strained relations which for many years obtained between Great Britain and Russia and which dated back to Britain's armed intervention in the Russian revolutionary struggle. Zionism was regarded by Soviet Russia as the protagonist of British interests in the Near East, and, in the language of the communists, as the representative there of British imperialism. This antagonism found its climax in the attitude of the

communists in Palestine, Jewish and non-Jewish, who, during the disturbances of 1936–38 openly supported the Arab terrorists against the Jewish population.

Both reasons have today lost their validity. The internal struggle between Russian Zionists and Russian Jewish communists has no significance at this time after more than twenty years of the Soviet regime. The new Jewish generation in Russia has no recollection of it. The non-Jewish communist was, in any case, not affected by it – a fact not without relevance in explaining why, in past talks with Soviet Russian diplomats, we often found more sympathy and understanding for the Zionist program among non-Jewish communists than among those of Jewish origin.

As regards the second cause of this antagonism, the situation has changed radically now that Soviet Russia and Great Britain are no longer enemies but allies, both for the duration of the war and thereafter.

We would urge that with the removal of these two main factors of historical antagonism, the moment has now come for the revision of the attitude of Soviet Russia to Zionism and for the establishment of relations of mutual understanding.

II. Reasons Favouring the Establishment of Relations of Understanding and Friendship between Zionism and Soviet Russia.

There is nothing intrinsic to the communist idea or in the requirements of Soviet policy which should make it impossible for Soviet Russia to sympathize with and support Jewish demands in regard to Palestine. Ideologically, Soviet Russia has throughout upheld the right of all peoples to their national existence. Indeed the fight for the liberation of oppressed peoples has been a cardinal principle of Soviet Russian ideology. The experiences in the past ten years of European Jewry outside of Soviet Russia have demonstrated the impossibility of a real solution of the Jewish problem by a mere guarantee of equality of rights or of so-called minority rights. On the other hand the Jewish people has in these ten years suffered more, comparatively, than any other. Not merely is some reparation due them in the world of tomorrow, but the possibility of the recurrence of a catastrophe such as that of the Hitler decade must be prevented by enabling them to establish a national life for themselves as a people equal among other peoples. Assuming that so far as Russian Jewry is concerned no emigration question arises, there still exists the far-reaching problem of emigration for the now uprooted and destitute Jewry of Europe outside of Soviet Russia, who will have to be resettled at the end of the war. Russia, as a leading world power, its past isolationism abandoned, cannot be disinterested or indifferent to the Jewish problem in Europe. And if the vast majority of these Jews, after the experiences of the past decade, ask the right to an autonomous and organic national life of their own in Palestine, that right should be accorded to them.

From a political point of view, Soviet Russia, which has a natural interest in the Near East, can have no reason to object to the setting up of a Jewish

commonwealth in Palestine. Russian diplomats have on a number of occasions indicated to us that Russia is not specially concerned with, nor has it any special regard for the claims of the Arabs. The Arab leaders in this war have openly or secretly been pro-Nazi or pro-fascist. Thus the ex-mufti of Jerusalem and the former Prime Minister of Iraq, Rashid Ali al-Kilani,[2] both came out on the side of the Nazis and today as fugitives conduct a vigorous propaganda on their behalf. But even those Arab leaders who took a more cautious position have never given any real support to the United Nations[3] in the war against the Axis. Egypt, bound by treaty with England to declare war against Italy and Germany in case of an invasion, maintained its position as a non-belligerent even when the Nazis were approaching Alexandria. Iraq, also bound in the event of hostilities to declare war against the Axis, first staged an abortive coup against the British and finally, after more than three years, declared war against the Axis only when its own participation was valueless and the victory of the United Nations seemed assured. Ibn Saud is still neutral today.

On the other hand, of all the peoples in the Near East the Jews alone, with devotion and passion, have done and are doing everything in their power in behalf of the common struggle against the Axis – and this despite all the difficulties which a narrow-minded colonial administration has put in the way of the full mobilization of their manpower and resources. From the point of view of safeguarding the allied position in the Near East and strengthening the progressive elements there, the development of a strong Jewish Palestine is of essential importance.

Moreover, what the Jews are trying to build in Palestine is not only a new national life of their own, but important new social forms. Palestine Jews in the overwhelming majority are not communists, but they are deeply concerned with questions of social organization; and the desire to establish a new society which shall be based on principles of justice and equality has already found most significant expression in Palestine Jewish life. The communal settlements and other forms of Palestinian agricultural and industrial organization, based on the principles of [cooperative] and national ownership of land and in many cases of the means of production represent basic tendencies with which the Soviet Union should have natural sympathy.

It may be added that a large part, if not the largest part, of the early pioneers and builders of modern Palestine were Russian Jews, with a natural sympathy for a Russia no longer antisemitic as was tsarist Russia. It was only natural therefore, that the Jewish community of Palestine should respond with warm enthusiasm to the heroic fight of Soviet Russia against the Nazis. This was recently recognized in an article in *Pravda* reported in a J[ewish] T[elegraphic] A[gency] message from Moscow dated May 17 and describing a

2. Rashid Ali al-Kilani headed a pro-Axis coup in Iraq in April–May 1941. After the suppression of the coup he fled to Germany and served as an anti-British propagandist.
3. That is, the Allied Powers.

gift of an ambulance and a portable hospital made by the Jews of Palestine to the Red Army.[4] The Jews of Palestine are praised in the Moscow press today as being first among the Jews of the democratic countries to respond to the call for aid for the Russian army. 'The delegation', *Pravda* writes, 'covered 2,000 kilometres travelling along desert and mountainous regions throughout Arabia and Persia. Jewish workers, colonists and men and women of all professions took an enthusiastic part in collecting funds in Palestine which made the gift possible. These people have asked their delegation to convey greetings to the Red Army in its fight for civilization.'

Summary: To sum up, then: (a) there is no intrinsic conflict either in theory or in fact between Soviet interests and the establishment of a Jewish Palestine. On the contrary, there is in many respects an underlying community of sympathies and interests; (b) the development of a Jewish Palestine will provide the only realistic solution of the Jewish migration problem as that will exist after this war; (c) the reestablishment of a Jewish nation there will constitute a great act of justice and reparation to the Jews after centuries of wrong.

III. Individual Problems

Apart from the general problem of a change in the attitude of Soviet Russia towards Zionism, there are two questions of detail which have been under discussion between Zionist leaders and representatives of the Russian government. These call for solution not only on their own merits, but as a means of paving the way for an improved relationship between Zionists and Russia.

Exit permits for Polish Jews: We have no intention of taking sides in the dispute between Soviet Russia and Poland on the question of the nationality of those Poles – both Jews and Christians – who fled into Russia during the war. But even granting the position of the Soviet government that all these refugees are now Russian citizens, there are good reasons why our request, submitted at various times through the Soviet Russian ambassadors in London and Washington, that a number of these Polish Jews should be given exit visas for immigration to Palestine, should be granted. Many of them have been unable to readjust themselves to the Russian war economy, and are really a burden to Russia. Thousands indeed have died because of the inevitable hardships of living conditions incidental to their sudden arrival as refugees in a country geared to a war economy; many of the refugees are mentally and ideologically strange to the Russia of today, such as rabbis, rabbinical students, and ardent young Zionists whose only passion and ideal is to devote their lives to the upbuilding of Palestine. On the other hand, Jewish Palestine suffers from an acute shortage of manpower in industry and in agriculture. 30,000

4. Reference is to ambulances, medical equipment and medicines donated by the *yishuv* to the Soviet Union. This was the first of three missions, headed by V League activists sent to Tehran. At the third and last meeting the league delegation managed to have a substantive conversation with the representative of the Soviet Red Cross, Dr. Barian (see Doc. 52).

young men – many of them taken from agriculture – are in the army; 10,000 are in the home-guard and in industrial war activities. Palestine could materially increase its contribution to the war effort if it had more manpower, and as Nazi-occupied Europe is hermetically closed for emigration, the main source of such additional manpower for Palestine is the Polish Jews in Soviet Russia, especially those concentrated in the provinces near Iran (Tashkent, Samarkand, etc.) whence they could easily get to Iran and Palestine. There is a precedent for such an emigration: when Soviet Russia occupied Lithuania at the beginning of the war and included Lithuania as part of the Soviet Union, the Soviet authorities gave permission to 5,000 Lithuanian Jews to go to Turkey and Palestine, despite the fact that, legally, they had become Russian citizens.[5] Similar permission could be granted today without any prejudice to the attitude and principles of the Soviet government, which regards them as Russian citizens. For Palestine this would be economically of the greatest importance, and would, in addition, be greeted by the Jewish people everywhere as a gesture of friendliness and good will.

Contact with Russian Jewry: Russian Jewry has, as a result of the isolationist policy previously pursued by Soviet Russia, hitherto been separated from contact with the rest of the Jewish people. This policy has changed with the entry of Russia into the war. The Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Kuibyshev is making great efforts to secure the sympathy and cooperation of Jews all over the world and, as mentioned above, has found its deepest response amongst the Jews of Palestine. It is of importance, both from the point of view of a rapprochement between Soviet Russia and other democratic peoples, and from the Jewish point of view, to strengthen the contacts between the great Russian Jewish community and other Jewish communities. The best method for achieving this would be for the Soviet authorities to grant permission for spokesmen of world Jewry and the world Zionist movement, to make personal contact with Russian Jewry. The visit of such a delegation to Russia could be highly beneficial in bringing about a better understanding between the Jewish people, including the Zionists in particular on the one hand, and the Russian Jewish community and Soviet Russia on the other.

IV. I would add in conclusion that nothing is more erroneous than the impression of certain Soviet Russian leaders, occasionally expressed to us, that the Zionist movement is antagonistic to Soviet Russia. There is no reason for such antagonism either in Zionist ideology or in Zionist policies. Zionism has always sided with the progressive movements. It has naturally regarded the Axis as its most deadly enemy and has welcomed and supported all those powers which took up the fight against the Nazis. Apart from this, Palestinian

---

5. Between September 1940 and April/May 1941, 2,500–3,000 Jewish refugees left Lithuania on the route Vilna–Minsk–Moscow–Vladivostok–Japan; about 2,400 left on the route Vilna–Minsk–Moscow–Kiev–Odessa–Istanbul, and some hundreds on the route Vilna–Moscow–Iran (see Levin, *The Lesser of Two Evils*, pp. 207–8).

Jewry, so strongly influenced by the desire to create a better social order, has throughout taken a deep and consistent interest in the tremendous experiments carried out in Russia, even if it has not agreed with all aspects of those experiments. The Zionist movement has always keenly regretted that it was forced into a position of conflict with Soviet Russia, and Russia's entry into the war at once inspired the hope that the opportunity for a change of attitude on the part of the Russian government towards Zionism might now offer itself. It will be a matter of deep satisfaction to the entire Zionist movement were such a change to take place and Soviet Russia to understand that there is no reason for it to fight Zionism, but that on the contrary there are deep and good reasons for Soviet Russia to lend its support to Zionist demands for a final and just solution of the Jewish problem.

28
Ch. Weizmann to the Soviet Jewish Delegation[1]

COPY: WA
New York, 25 June 1943

I feel it is a privilege to extend greetings to the distinguished delegation whom the Soviet Union has sent as cultural envoys to America.

There are several fundamentals in our relationships with Russia that we should face. As Americans and as Jews, what is the basis of our friendship with her people? Is it merely because they and we have a common enemy in Germany? Is it because in the Soviet Union we have a powerful ally which has stopped the so-called invincible army in its tracks and pinned it down on the Eastern Front – nervous and fearful of the inevitable attack that will surely come from almost any direction upon its rear? Is it because in the Soviet Union we have a nation which has given freely of her sons – five million of them – whose gallant fight has cost the enemy almost double that number?

My friends, while these facts bring about an admiration for Russia, our friendship for her people is motivated by something far more profound. We are deeply moved by the evidence made apparent day by day that hers is a people's war, hers is a people's army, her defenders are men, women and

1. This address was delivered at a public meeting held in New York in honour of the two emissaries of the Soviet Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, Solomon Mikhoels and Itsik Fefer. Mikhoels and Fefer conducted a tour in the US, Canada, Mexico and Great Britain in mid-1943 to mobilize support and arouse feelings among the Jewish population in favour of the Soviet war effort. At the trial of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in 1952, Itsik Fefer testified as follows: 'I declare to the court that we used Weizmann to get prominent public figures in America to join the committee for the reception of the delegation. It should be noted that without this [luncheon] meeting these figures would not have joined [the committee], and later they appealed for all forces to unite against fascism. Until [our] meeting with Weizmann, some prominent figures did not want to participate in the activities arranged by our embassy, but after the meeting with him they did' (see *Nepravednyi sud*, p. 335).

children. Her war, like ours, is a war fought for a people's objective; as Vice-President Wallace has said, for the common man of the world of tomorrow.

Our friendship came about because we Jews understand suffering. As we know the Nazis, so the Russians know them for what they are – not soldiers fighting for their country, but vandals, sadistic beasts of prey and murderers of the innocent. The Russians have suffered much at their hands. Our fellow-Jews across the seas, pillaged and alone, have suffered grievously. They and we feel the suffering of a civilian population which, contrary to the laws of international warfare and every moral code, is subjected to a remorseless cruelty that would put even a Genghis Khan to shame. Our sons, like the Russians, who have gone forth on the field of battle, know that they are fighting against the ways of physical enslavement and moral decadence.

We should emulate the Russians in the standards which they set up of equal treatment of races and of peoples, symbolised by the historic message of Stalin on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the Red Army:

The Red Army is free from the feeling of racial hatred. It is free of such a degrading feeling because it has been brought up in the spirit of racial equality and respect for the rights of other people. Also one should not forget that in our country any manifestation of racial hatred is punished by law.

Yes, and we are grateful to their army, which shared its food and supplies with refugees, Jews as well as others, who came their way. These are bonds which transcend differences.

We have sought to respond in kind. We have aided and shall continue to aid the Soviet Union materially by medical supplies, clothing, food and other essentials of war relief. I take pride in the fact that 600,000 Jews are serving in the Soviet army and countless others are braving danger in the guerrilla units which attack the Germans behind the lines. Many a chapter of the Russian offensive has been recorded in the sacrificial heroism of Jewish men and women.

Our pledge to fight this people's war is written in their blood, and we, in turn, are determined to give of our blood, treasure, talent and toil, so that no people anywhere in the world shall be pariahs or outcasts, but all shall live in security and freedom.

29
Meeting of the Jewish Agency Executive (London, 14 September 1943)

MINUTES: WA
Secret

Present: Dr. Weizmann, Professor Brodetsky, Professor Namier, Mr. Linton

1) *Talk with Mr. Maiskii:* Dr. Weizmann said he had had a long talk with Mr. Maiskii just before the latter's departure from England. He had given Mr. Maiskii an account of their situation, and also of his talk with President Roosevelt.[1] He had told Mr. Maiskii that the British would not act alone, but would need the moral support of America and Russia. It was at this stage that he had told him about the president, and had added that as regards Russia they did not know what the position was. They had been friendly towards Russia and hoped that the Soviet government would understand their aims.

Mr. Maiskii had replied that he could not commit his government, but he believed that the Soviets would support them. There was one thing which worried him and that was the smallness of Palestine. He had tried his best to dispel Mr. Maiskii's fears on this score and had given him a number of reasons for their belief that, on a conservative estimate, they could bring in some two million more Jews. He had pointed out that when Lord Samuel returned recently from Palestine he had spoken of three millions, while Dr. Lowdermilk had mentioned a figure of four millions.[2] Mr. Maiskii said he was very glad to hear that, and would bear the subject in mind when he got back to Russia. He thought that Russia would certainly stand by them. Mr. Maiskii said that it was terrible what the Germans had done to the Jews. When they came to a liberated city they found nothing but corpses and graves.

Dr. Weizmann then broached the subject of the imprisoned Zionists, and of exit permits for Polish Jews in Russia. Mr. Maiskii said that this was not within his competence and suggested that Dr. Weizmann should discuss these matters with Mikhoels and Fefer.[3]

[...][4]

---

1. The meeting took place on 11 June 1943. Roosevelt related to Weizmann that at that time he had proposed to Churchill to convene a Jewish–Arab conference, with himself and Churchill present, to settle the Arab–Jewish problem. He added some disparaging remarks about the Arab contribution to the war effort (*The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, Series A, Vol. XXI, p. 39).
2. Walter B. Lowdermilk, American irrigation engineer, author of an irrigation and settlement plan to transfer water from the Jordan River to the Negev.
3. See Doc. 28.
4. The rest of the document deals with extraneous issues.

30
Meeting: N. Goldmann – A. Gromyko (Washington, 23 September 1943)

MEMORANDUM: CZA Z6/2262

Present: Dr. Nahum Goldmann and Mr. Andrei Gromyko

I told the ambassador that the purpose of my visit was not to discuss any concrete matters with him but to establish contact.[1] I told him of the various conversations with his predecessor, Mr. Litvinov, who had seen also Dr. Weizmann, Mr. Ben-Gurion and Mr. Shertok.

I told the Ambassador that we all feel that Soviet Russia cannot remain indifferent to the problem of Palestine and the problem of the Jews of Europe. As one of the Great Powers Soviet Russia will have to take an attitude concerning the solution of the Jewish problem and the settlement of the Palestine question.

I said that we all understand that the Soviet government will not fix its attitude concerning these questions now during hostilities, but we feel that the government should be kept informed by us of developments so that they should have our view point in mind when the time comes for them to determine their policy. For that reason I had kept Mr. Litvinov informed of developments in the Palestine situation and I would like to have the opportunity to do the same thing with Mr. Gromyko.

He replied that he agreed with me, that the Soviet government would have to take an interest in these matters and that he would be very glad to see me whenever I felt that I had information to convey to him. He also said that he would be glad to receive any written or printed material I would like to submit to him and that he would see to it that the Soviet government received such material. (I sent him the text of my address at the American Jewish Conference and the resolution of the conference.)

He then discussed with me the visit of Prof. Mikhoels and Lt.-Col. Fefer[2] to this country and inquired as to the attitude of the State Department concerning Palestine.

The new ambassador is a youngish, quiet man, very careful but sympathetic.

Nahum Goldmann

1. Andrei Andreeevich Gromyko had replaced Litvinov as Soviet ambassador to the US in 1943.
2. See Doc. 28.

31
D. Ben-Gurion's Report to the Meeting of the Jewish Agency Executive (Jerusalem, 4 October 1943)

MINUTES: CZA S100/40
Secret

MEETING WITH MAISKII

Mr. Ben-Gurion: I would like to begin with a brief report from Jerusalem. I hope that this will not get into the newspapers until Sunday, and I hope that what does not reach the papers from another source will likewise not get there from this source.

On Saturday night Dr. [Bernard] Joseph received a telephone call from the Chief Secretariat.[1] He was told that Maiskii was here[2] and had expressed a desire to visit Jewish settlements, and they requested that plans be made – for visits of a day, a half day, and an afternoon. Afterwards they informed us that the program for an afternoon visit had been accepted, beginning at 3:30. The itinerary included only two places near Jerusalem – Kiryat Anavim and Maale Hahamisha.

Shertok was not here; I took Kaplan with me as the economic expert. After we arrived at Government House, the secretary said that he wanted to send him [Maiskii] two books: the report of the Royal Commission[3] and the Woodhead Report.[4] So it was obvious that there had been a talk with Maiskii and that they wanted to provide him with literature. They could not prevent a direct meeting with us, but they arranged it in such a way that he would have very little time available for the Jews. In the morning they took him to the Old City and dragged him around there for the whole morning. He was tired, and he came to us only at 4 o'clock and informed us that we had to get him back before dark.

We went to those places [on the itinerary]. The visit there had some social value: he asked questions and probed about the kibbutz. I had felt in London[5]

---

1. The chief executive body of the mandatory government, responsible to the high commissioner for Palestine.
2. Maiskii made a three-day stopover in Palestine on his way from London to the Soviet Union. He met with *yishuv* leaders on his own initiative.
3. The Peel Commission was set up in May 1936 in the wake of serious rioting in Palestine. The commission published its findings in July 1937, recommending partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states with Britain retaining direct control over the holy places. The Jewish state was alloted the plain of Sharon, the Jezreel Valley and the Galilee. It was the first public proposal of partition as a solution to the Palestine problem.
4. The Woodhead Commission was appointed in 1938 to investigate various partition proposals for Palestine according to the recommendation of the Peel Commission. The final version of the borders suggested by this committee called for large-scale cuts in the territory to be allocated to the Jewish state, restricting it essentially to the coastal plain.
5. See Doc. 7.

that he thought we were making things up, because we are doing something they don't dare do in Russia. He was very impressed by the place; he was amazed when he saw forests, fruit trees and more. That really is an excellent place for showing what was there before and what [is there] now. The lads talked with them, explained to them about the kibbutz, how it runs. At Maale Hahamisha he saw a less developed stage, and it captivated him. His wife was with him, intensively involved; she wanted to know what everything was called in Hebrew. It was a bit awkward because there was a large escort of the army and the secret service.

On the way back we had intended to talk business – about Zionism – and he himself began with a question about Zionism. He asked whether we were preparing for the postwar period, if we had settlement plans for after the war – and [added] I appeal to you to keep this between us: after the war there will be a serious Jewish problem and it will have to be resolved; we have to express an opinion, so we must know. We are told that there is no room here in Palestine, we want to know the truth, what is the capacity of Palestine?

We told him a little about the plans we are drawing up, that we want to draw up, general concepts about settlement in the Negev, irrigation, ideas for large-scale projects. I told him about the possibility of two million Jews, though I couldn't give an exact time framework. He asked for [written] plans and material. I explained to him why he was being told that there was no room. I gave him two reasons: some [say so] because they lack faith, because they are used to other, large territories; others know that it is possible but they do not want it. He also asked for photographs, photo albums of the country, he wanted to send his friends pictures of Palestine, of Jerusalem. We gave him the literature we had with us, including two books by Dr. Ruppin.[6] He asked for more material that demonstrated the absorptive capacity. I told him that we would gladly send it, and he said that everything was now in Moscow.[7] However, I said that it was impossible for us to send these by mail, and he informed me that it would soon be possible.

My impression is that he is taking a serious interest. He told us that they [the Russian leadership] would have to express an opinion, he spoke as though the government wished to express its opinion. He is now number three in foreign affairs: Stalin, Molotov and Maiskii, and, as the expert on Europe, it is up to him to deal with this question.

His wife was very impressed. It was all a great surprise to me. He had formed a certain impression in London, now he took the initiative.

By the time we returned it was already growing dark. He asked us to take him through the Jewish section of Jerusalem – either he really wanted to see more of Jewish Jerusalem, or he wanted to talk with us some more. We were happy to do so, and we decided which neighbourhoods to visit.

6. Arthur Ruppin, expert on agricultural settlement in Palestine and member of the Jewish Agency Executive in charge of settlement of immigrants from Germany.
7. Soviet government offices and ministries returned to Moscow from Kuibyshev beginning in August 1943.

When we entered the city and turned in the direction we had decided, the whole armada behind us got into a panic. We told them that it was his wish and they had to accept it. We went through Zikhron Moshe, Mea Shearim, Haneviim Street, Rehavia, and then we took him home.

He said he was leaving the next day, that he was going to travel home by car. Since the route goes through the [Jezreel] Valley, we suggested that he visit our settlements, to which he replied that he had been told his wife would be in danger.

He saw both sides, the socialist and the Zionist, which are very conspicuous, but it was clear that he displayed a serious political attitude towards this issue of whether Palestine could solve the Jewish question after the war or not. For me it was a revelation. I could hardly believe it. It obligates us to act – here is another country that is taking an interest in this question.

32
Meeting: A. Sultanov – M. Shertok (Cairo, 21 December 1943)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.7, P.4, D.4, L.1
Secret

EXTRACT FROM COMRADE SULTANOV'S CONVERSATION WITH MR. SHERTOK, HEAD OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT OF THE [JEWISH][1] AGENCY IN PALESTINE ON 21 DECEMBER 1943

Speaking of the Agency's plans in Palestine, Mr. Shertok said: 'we are aiming for "stabilization" in Palestine. We must become firmly established there at all costs. At the moment there are half a million Jews and a million Arabs there. We hope to increase Jewish immigration into Palestine after the war, so as to turn the proportions into 2 million Jews to 1 million Arabs, and to stabilize the position at that level. We are creating industry and transport. We control the economy. We shall gain political domination once we are in the majority.'

To my question: 'But what do the Arabs think of your plans and what are your relations with them?', Mr. Shertok answered: 'Of course the Arabs oppose Jewish immigration, but we shall use every possible means to get permission for immigration. After all, there used to be only 100,000 of us, and now there are 500,000. They must respect our opinion. After the war there will be tens of thousands of ravaged Jews, and we shall resettle them in Palestine. Only we must get the Great Powers to agree to this. During the war we settled 45,000

1. Original has, erroneously, 'European Zionist'.

Jews in Palestine. After the war it will go more quickly. Our workers are very well organized. The peasant agricultural colonies are not bad either. In the Allied (British) forces we have about 23,000 volunteers, of which more than one thousand are in the navy alone. If we had our own government, we could put together a respectable army.'

Second Secretary of the USSR Mission to Egypt[2]
Sultanov

33
N.V. Novikov to S.I. Kavtaradze (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.7A, D.1, LL.1–2
Cairo, 15 April 1944
Secret

To the Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Comrade Kavtaradze,

In the last few days our legation has received from provincial, regional and local organizations of the 'Muslim Brotherhood' – 'Ihwan al-muslimin' – throughout Egypt more than 230 letters of protest against efforts to turn Palestine into a 'Jewish state', and just as many letters of protest against the conversion of Algeria into a French province by giving the Algerians French citizenship.[1]

The following are typical points made in these letters on the Palestine question:

1. Palestine is an Arab Muslim country and belongs indisputably to the Arabs by right of conquest.
2. The Jews have no historic or moral right to lay claim to Palestine.
3. The creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, the heart of the Arab countries, is intended to break up Arab unity.
4. The Allies' cooperation in the establishment of a Jewish state violates the Atlantic Charter and destroys the Arabs' hope and trust in Allied promises.
5. All speeches and manoeuvres[2] intended to solve the Palestine problem at

---

Doc. 32

2. Soviet–Egyptian diplomatic relations were established on 26 July 1943. The Soviet envoy N.V. Novikov was appointed on 14 October 1943.

Doc. 33

1. On 12 December 1943 De Gaulle announced that French citizenship was to be granted to prominent Muslims in Algeria; the proportion of Muslims in local assemblies was to be increased and more administrative posts to be opened up to them.
2. On 1 February 1944, Senators Robert F. Wagner and Robert A. Taft introduced a resolution in the US Senate urging that the US take steps to open the gates of Palestine for free entry of Jews and reconstitute Palestine as a free and democratic Jewish commonwealth. A similar resolution was introduced in the House of Representatives. The latter's Committee on Foreign Affairs held a public hearing on Palestine on 8–16 February 1944.

the expense of the Arabs are doomed to failure, because the Arabs are ready to stand as one to defend their ancient rights to Palestine.

6. The Muslim Brotherhood fully supports the Egyptian government's protest,[3] and notes with gratitude the firm position taken by all the Arab countries on the Palestine question.

[...][4]

Such is the content of these letters. Evidently, such letters have been sent to all foreign missions and embassies. These letters of protest against Jewish immigration to Palestine are a response to speeches in the American Senate and press in support of the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. They are a reaction to the Zionist campaign to mobilize Allied public opinion for the repeal of the White Paper and for unlimited immigration into Palestine,[5] and, finally, to the latest speeches of Zionist extremists in Palestine.

Minister N. Novikov

34
I.V. Samylovskii to Kuznetsov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.7, P.4, D.14, LL.2–3
Moscow, 22 July 1944
Secret

To the head of the Chief Customs Directorate of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade of the USSR, Comrade Kuznetsov,

We have received from our legation in Cairo letters from various Jewish organizations in Palestine engaged in sending parcels to relatives in the USSR. In these letters they say:

1. For eight years there has been an office in Tel Aviv (Palestine) for sending parcels to the USSR. Before the war it paid customs duties to the Soviet consuls in the Baltic States. Recently the parcels have been sent via South Africa, where the Soviet consul would receive the duties on the parcels. Now the office has had to stop sending parcels by this method for the following reasons:

a) South Africa has no postal convention with the USSR, so that the parcels had to be sent from Pretoria to London, and from there to the USSR.

b) South Africa has temporarily suspended the despatch of these parcels for want of free ships.

---

3. The Egyptian government protested in a note to the US minister in Egypt on 28 February 1944.
4. One paragraph, concerning the situation in Algeria, has been omitted.
5. Reference is presumably to the nation-wide campaign of Jewish organizations in the US against the White Paper which began on 3 October 1943.

Recently, the parcels have been sent via Tehran, and customs duties were paid there, but the Palestine government is hindering the transmission of the parcels to Tehran since this involves the transfer of money to Tehran for payment of customs duties. For this reason the parcels are being sent to the USSR and the duties paid on the spot. The letters further say that there are many people in Palestine who want to help their relatives in the USSR, but those who send these parcels, do not wish to burden the recipients with the payment of customs duties, and so propose the following.

a) The duty should be paid to our legation in Egypt in Palestinian pounds, according to an agreed tariff.

b) The duty on parcels containing second-hand goods, for the value of which there is no record, should be established according to their weight.

2. Since the duty exceeds the value of the parcels by 100–120 per cent, they are asking that goods of a non-commercial nature which are sent to the USSR be exempt from protective tariffs and other duties. If for various reasons all parcels cannot be exempted, they insist that gift parcels sent by voluntary societies and other charitable institutions should be so exempted. If this suggestion is unacceptable, they ask for a reduction of duties by 50–60 per cent at least. In that case, the Jewish Agency for Palestine must have the right to certify the nature of the parcels being sent, i.e., whether they are of a commercial or charitable nature.

The Near East Department would appreciate receiving your conclusions regarding the substance of the above proposals.[1]

Director of the Near East Department
I. Samylovskii

35
D. Ben-Gurion to I.M. Maiskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.017, OP.1, P.4, D.39, LL.58–9
Jerusalem, 8 August 1944

Dear Mr. Maiskii,

When I had the pleasure several months ago of showing you Jewish collective settlements near Jerusalem[1] you requested authoritative figures on

---

Doc. 34
1. Added by hand in the margin: 'endorsed by S[ergei] K[avtaradze]'.

Doc. 35
1. See Doc. 31.

the absorptive capacity of Palestine for new Jewish settlers. I am sending you herewith a memorandum on the subject prepared by David Horowitz, a research worker of the Jewish Agency Economic Research Bureau.[2]

The memorandum is of two-fold import. In the first part (pages 1–23) a record is presented of the several phases of the Jewish effort of reconstruction, while a number of inferences are drawn from the practical experience accumulated in the course of this work. It will be seen that the development of Palestine during the inter-war period diverged in important respects from that of other countries. The economy of the country expanded while its population grew both by natural increase and immigration. The growth of the population was considerably outstripped by increases of production, consumption and the access of capital per head of the population. This whole development conferred very considerable benefits on the indigenous population, as reflected in their rising living standards, decreasing infant mortality etc.

In the second part of the memorandum an effort is made to assess the country's potentialities for the absorption of further immigrants. As will be seen, on the basis of very conservative estimates in the fields of agricultural and industrial production and the development of trade and communications, the conclusion is reached that Palestine could absorb over 2,500,000 new settlers. This is by no means an excessive assumption, as indicated by a comparison of the density of population in other countries of similar size quoted in the respective sections of the memorandum.

The first part analyzes the methods of agricultural and industrial development as applied in the past. The second is based on the projection into the future of the methods proved by experience to be both feasible and effective. These methods are likely to be further developed and improved in the course of time and by accumulated experience. The main factors operative in the past, and likely to be instrumental also in the future, are the following:

(a) The evolution of an economy of intensive development and growing population fostered by a continuous large-scale immigration and the import of capital.

(b) The projection of the structure and level of economic development achieved in the colonisation sector of the economy into the whole country.

(c) The transformation of uncultivated into cultivable and cultivated land by amelioration of soil and irrigation.

(d) The industrialization of the country.

(e) The transition to modern forms of economy.

(f) The application of the system of interchangeability of space, capital and

---

2. The memorandum is filed in AVP RF, f.0118, op.7, p.4, d.7, l.8. It is accompanied by the following note from Solod, counsellor of the USSR embassy in Egypt, to Maiskii: 'I enclose a survey of Palestine's economic prospects and a letter from the president of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, David Ben-Gurion. Epstein, a member of the Jewish Agency, has told us that this survey was compiled to keep a promise made during your journey through Palestine in 1943.'

skill with a view to increasing both the density and standard of life of the population.

In the course of the past twenty years numerous estimates of the country's absorptive capacity have been made by very competent authorities, Jewish and non-Jewish, including government commissioners. They have invariably been outstripped by the actual development of the country which, as pointed out, is proceeding under the impetus of an urge stronger than mere economic necessity.

It will also be observed that in preparing these estimates it has been taken for granted that the indigenous Arab population will remain in the country and will benefit from its general development. We hold that there is sufficient unused but cultivable land in Palestine to provide both for the needs of the existing population and for the absorption of the new Jewish settlers and that the experience of recent years has shown that Palestine, because of the immigration of Jewish technicians and specialists, is capable of becoming the centre of important industrial development, from which the whole Middle East is likely to derive substantial benefits in the postwar era.

Yours sincerely,

D. Ben-Gurion

36
USSR Embassy in Turkey[1] to L.D. Kislova[2] (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.7, P.4, D.7, L.8
Ankara, 9 August 1944
Secret

To Member of the Board of the All Union Society for Cultural Relations [VOKS], Comrade Kislova,

I think I should give you some information about the activities in Palestine and Lebanon of certain organizations which have made it their aim to establish links with the USSR. I collected this information during my trip to these countries in the spring of this year.

In Palestine.

1. The Palestinian society known as the V League for Soviet Russia has become more and more openly Zionist in the last year and a half.[3] It could well be called a society for Zionist propaganda instead of a society for cultural

1. The author of this document was apparently the first secretary of the USSR embassy in Ankara, Sergei Mikhailov (see AVP RF, f.0118, op.8, p.4, d.11, l.7).
2. Copy sent to I.V. Samylovskii, director of the Near East Department in the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs.
3. See Doc. 15, n. 2.

relations with the USSR and for helping Red Army troops. Not only is it doing nothing to popularize the USSR or to strengthen ties with it, but it even uses funds collected to aid the Red Army for publication, through the Jewish Agency, of Zionist propaganda material in Russian (I enclose an example with this letter). I also enclose the financial statement of the league for the period 1 November 1942 to 1 October 1943 (in Hebrew) and a brief report on its activity (in English), both of which are characteristic of its behaviour.[4] The latter has been compiled by those members of the league who oppose turning the league into an organization for Zionist propaganda. It shows rather objectively the basic anti-Soviet essence of this organization's activity, but it must be said that it is too brief to give a full picture. To supplement the report, you should know that the league has completely stopped using the material sent by you and the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, and therefore, in my opinion, we should send it no more material at all. To give an example: the albums, posters, books and other material which you recently sent to the league were not only not displayed to the public at large, but the league's anti-Soviet Zionist leadership has refused to show them to its rank-and-file activists who are genuinely interested in the life and struggle of the USSR. The gramophone records which you sent to the league were not only not used, but were made quite worthless by deliberately careless and destructive storage (they lie about on the floor of the league's offices in paper envelopes). The real activists in the league, who cherish its idea and are grouped around the Levant Publishing Company,[5] asked me whether they ought to leave the league and to organize a real society of friends of the Soviet Union in Palestine, purged of the Zionist spirit. I declined to give an answer since I needed first of all to coordinate the question with you. I would, therefore, be grateful if you would let me know your opinion on this matter.

2. I consider that the Levant publishing house, which I mentioned above, deserves support since first, there are no Zionist elements in it, and second, it does useful work by publishing and distributing our literature in Hebrew and Arabic. In particular, it successfully reproduces the journal *War and the Working Class*[6] in Hebrew. However, this 'publishing company', if it can be so called, which is organized by amateurs and without money (its 'basic working capital' amounts to about £50 in all), is of course unable to engage in any widespread publishing activity. These difficulties are increased because the Jewish authorities, committed to the cause of Zionism, are a great obstacle, since they control the distribution of paper.

3. In one of your letters you asked what the Palestine Committee for Cultural Relations with the USSR amounts to. It is, in essence, an anti-Soviet organization which is run by the Jewish Agency, and is an example of Zionist

4. Not included in this volume.
5. Known by its acronym Lepak.
6. This journal, which began appearing in 1943, was the forerunner of *Novoe vremia* (New Times).

camouflage and demagogy of the worst sort. Created for Zionist propaganda in the Soviet Union, it obviously deserves no attention from us, except for appropriate measures against its activity.

4. The Arab Anti-Fascist League in Palestine has almost entirely ceased its activity owing to shortage of funds.

5. I enclose the brochure of Veritas Militans, *The Jews and the Question of Antisemitism*, and also a letter from a certain Margulies, who is evidently the author of the brochure, and who asks us to let him have our opinion of the work. The brochure is of some interest. It was sent to the embassy by post.

6. I am sending for your consideration, and possibly for passing on to some literary museum, Romain Rolland's letter about antisemitism and his attitude towards Jews in the USSR, which I received in Palestine.[7] This letter has not yet been published.

37
Meeting: N. Goldmann – K. Umanskii (Mexico City, 15 August 1944)

COPY: CZA Z6/2253

Present: Ambassador Umanskii and Dr. Nahum Goldmann

Mr. Umanskii said he wanted to discuss various problems with Dr. Goldmann, not as ambassador, but as one who is interested in certain questions both as a Russian and as a Jew. He first asked Dr. Goldmann whether he could tell him about the visits of President Beneš with Stalin and others in the Soviet government.[1] He knew of the discussions but was eager to hear the details.

Dr. Goldmann gave the gist of these conversations as reported by Mr. Beneš.

Mr. Umanskii thought the report indicated the line Russia would take on the Palestine problem. He doesn't know whether they are yet ready to take a formal position, but believed that the thinking was along the lines of furthering a Jewish state in Palestine. He asked whether Dr. Goldmann knew if the British were discussing this with the Russians.

Dr. Goldmann said he didn't know, but that if they were, they were not likely to inform him about it.

Mr. Umanskii said they would probably do what they always do – first take it up with the Americans and then with the Russians, after an agreement had

---

Doc. 36

7. Perhaps during Mikhailov's visit to Palestine in 1942. See Doc. 16.

Doc. 37

1. See Doc. 27.

been reached. However, he said, 'it doesn't matter – we can stand up against both'.

He asked Dr. Goldmann where he thought Palestine would get the Jews, assuming a Jewish state [were established]. Is not Jewish public opinion aware of what has happened to European Jewry?

Dr. Goldmann said the Jews were aware of this, and [the] problem is a very serious one. However, he believed that there would be about two and a half million left, of which about a million would go to Palestine.

Mr. Umanskii said let us not speak in generalities – let us take country after country and tell me where you think there are that many.

Dr. Goldmann said that if the status quo remained about 800,000 would be in the Balkans, including Hungary, of whom half would be ready to go to Palestine. There would be about three to four hundred thousand in Poland, to which might be added another 200,000 Polish Jews in Russia, whom Russia would allow to return to Poland or go to some other country. Of these two groups there would be about 250,000 for Palestine. In central and Western Europe, it was hoped that another 200,000 remained, of which a part would want to go to Palestine. Then there are other sources of Jewish manpower – from North Africa, where the conditions under which Jews live are not too good, in Iraq, and in Yemen. Thus the figure of one million might be reached. Lastly, perhaps not immediately, but later, Jews from the Western Hemisphere might start to go.

Mr. Umanskii said he was glad to hear Dr. Goldmann mention this. He had the feeling that the Jews in American countries were fooling themselves concerning the stability of their position. He did not mean the United States, but the Latin American countries, where the situation was critical and may change for the worse from one day to the next.

Mr. Umanskii then asked about the boundaries of Palestine.

Dr. Goldmann said that there was the danger of partition, and was asked for details. He said that the Zionists rejected partition.

Mr. Umanskii said of course he understood that, 'but...'

Dr. Goldmann said that if anything like the Peel scheme[2] were offered, or any other scheme which would omit Galilee, the Emek [Jezreel Valley] and Haifa, it could not even be considered. However, if some concession to the Arabs is necessary, and a small part of the Nablus region were tied up with Transjordan, that might be acceptable. Dr. Goldmann explained all this on the map and the Ambassador took notes.

Then Mr. Umanskii said he wanted to discuss the security aspect – who would protect the Jewish state and what was its program?

Dr. Goldmann said that as yet there was no program, because the situation is not yet clear enough to enable the Zionists to formulate one – whether the Near East is to be regarded as a British sphere of influence, whether there will

---

2. See Doc. 31, nn. 3, 4.

be a Near East Federation, is not yet known. Therefore he could give only his personal opinion. The larger the number of guarantors, the better. The three powers should guarantee the Jewish state, rather than only a British guarantee, though there would be no objection if the big powers would want the Jewish state to grant military positions in Palestine to the British. The object is to try to obtain the maximum of international support. The Jews are a people who live in all countries and should try not to be dragged in to any of the power combinations of the future. What they need is an international guarantee, which, for all practical purposes, means that the three leading powers should underwrite it.

Mr. Umanskii said he thought this an excellent line – not to orient the Jewish state towards only one group. Once Russia agreed to the state, they might also be willing to guarantee security together with the United States and Great Britain.

Mr. Umanskii brought up the question of the Russian-Jewish delegation coming for the World Jewish Congress conference in November.[3]

Dr. Goldmann said there had been no reply yet, but the congress was eager to have such a delegation, which should include not only delegates from the Anti-Fascist League, but a representative of the orthodox group, which would make a deep impression on public opinion.

He agreed that Mikhoels, plus a bearded orthodox representative, was an excellent idea and he was prepared to recommend that such a delegation be permitted to come. He recommended getting in touch with Mikhoels, who was in favour of such a delegation and carried great weight with the government. He then discussed the possibility of Dr. Goldmann's going to Russia and of some Jewish delegation from here. He, personally, was in favour of the idea, but, as ambassador, could not do very much about it. This also should be referred to Mikhoels. He knew from him (he saw him in Mexico) that he wanted to be helpful and to arrange for Dr. Goldmann and perhaps some others to go to Russia.

Dr. Goldmann said he wanted to establish contact with Mr. [Emil] Sommerstein, the new member of the Polish Committee of Liberation.[4] About this, Mr. Umanskii also said that Mikhoels should be contacted, for he would certainly deliver a message.

Mr. Umanskii asked that his regards be given to Dr. Wise, and invited Dr. Goldmann to come to see him again.

The meeting lasted an hour and a half and was most cordial.

N.G.

---

3. In November 1944 the World Jewish Congress convened a War Emergency Conference in Atlantic City. This conference discussed the situation of the Jewish communities in Nazi-occupied Europe and the measures to be adopted to help and save them and to rehabilitate them after the termination of the war. Soviet Jewry was not represented at this conference.
4. Established in Lublin in July 1944 as the first administration of the new Poland. Composed mostly of communists, it was reorganized by Moscow in January 1945 as Poland's provisional government.

38
E. Epstein to D. Ben-Gurion (Jerusalem)

COPY: CZA S25/486
Jerusalem, 3 September 1944
Secret

RE: NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET LEGATION IN CAIRO

Upon arriving in Cairo in mid-July, I visited the Soviet legation in order to submit a memorandum on the absorption capacity of Palestine to Ivan Maiskii, who displayed an interest in the subject during his visit to Palestine last year.[1] I was received by Solod, the legation's adviser, who was filling in for Minister Novikov, then on a mission to Syria and Lebanon.[2]

In my conversation with Mr. Solod, I raised the question of a Soviet legation in Palestine and I asked him whether now, following the resolution of the Syria and Lebanon issue, his government intended to establish a permanent mission in Palestine as well. Solod replied that undoubtedly there would soon be discussion about opening a consulate-general in Palestine, but it was not yet clear whether it would be subordinated to the legation in Egypt or to the legation to be established in Syria and Lebanon.

I went on to say that since the situation of Palestine differed from that of the neighbouring countries – because it is the national home of the Jewish people – it would be useful for the Russian legation closest to Palestine to be apprised about the country and its problems from the authorized institution which represents the Jewish people as regards the development of Palestine, and if possible this should be done before a decision is made on the issue of a Russian mission in Palestine. Solod said he thought the suggestion a sound one, but that the meeting would not be arranged if we did not press the matter. In that case, I said, he should consider my proposal an approach in that spirit. He replied that the decision would have to await Novikov's return. He then asked: And who will represent the Jewish Agency at this meeting? It depends, I replied, on who will hear out our representative on behalf of your legation. He replied: It will probably be the minister himself, Mr. Novikov. I said that in that case I could conjecture that the Jewish Agency's position would be presented by its executive chairman, Mr. Ben-Gurion. I asked him whether he had heard of Ben-Gurion; he said he had heard the name and knew who he was.

Later in the conversation, Solod noted that we should not think that Moscow knew nothing about us or took no interest in us. Only recently the legation in Cairo had been asked to send material about us and had sent

1. Cf. Doc. 31.
2. Novikov signed an agreement with the governments of Lebanon and Syria on the establishment of diplomatic relations. Solod became the first minister accredited to both capitals.

whatever they had (not much! he remarked, and thanked us for the little we gave him). It was Maiskii, he said, who handled our affairs, and indirectly perhaps also Litvinov, who was in charge of postwar international arrangements.

Afterwards he asked me many questions about Palestine – about the social, economic and cultural life of the *yishuv* and about the Arabs – and demonstrated that he had ruminated on what I had told him on my previous visits to Cairo. He also mentioned, as if incidentally, that Sultanov[3] had not taken advantage of the opportunities to become more thoroughly acquainted with Palestine, and consequently others of their officials must fill the lacunae in this respect.

He replied with great reservation to questions about assistance to Jewish refugees in Russia and to [the possibility of] searching for relatives, explaining that these matters were not within their purview. To Mr. Gruenbaum's proposal, which I put to him, of bombing the centres of Jewish extermination in Poland,[4] he replied that the legation in Cairo was not authorized to give strategic advice to military headquarters in Moscow. Furthermore, such an idea was out of the question politically, since the government of Russia would not adopt measures which were based on national grounds. For such reasons his government had also rejected several requests for help which were put forward on Slavic grounds.

After a few days had passed and I saw nothing in the press about Novikov's return, I called on Solod again in order to clarify the situation. Solod said that since Novikov's return had been delayed by a week to ten days, he himself had decided to cable Moscow and request instructions concerning my proposal.

I waited nine days for an answer. On 15 August Solod invited me to the legation, and he apprised me as follows:

'I have received a reply from Moscow, stating that your proposal must be deferred for a month or two. The reason is technical, since Novikov will have to deal with several urgent matters in the near future which will necessitate his absence from Egypt, and he will not be able to find time for talks with you, for which he, too, must prepare.'

I asked him on the spot whether the reply meant that my proposal had been rejected, since I had to know exactly how to explain the matter to my superiors. He replied: No, it is not a negative answer; we would not be ashamed to say so if that is what we thought. He asked me to be in touch with the legation at the end of the period he had mentioned in order to raise the subject again if we should so desire.

During the same visit he introduced me to Dr. Mikhail Korostovtsev, the TASS correspondent in Egypt and the representative of the Russian Academy of Sciences in the Middle East. Subsequently I had two meetings with him; he invited me to dine with him and displayed a desire to forge close ties with our institutions in Palestine in order to acquaint him with our way of life and gain

3. Abdulrahman Sultanov, second secretary at the Soviet legation in Cairo.
4. See Doc. 41.

first-hand knowledge of our problems. He said he had taken an interest in our enterprise while he was still in Russia after reading in the foreign press about Zionism and our accomplishments in Palestine. Fluent in English and French, he is now also studying Arabic. He is an Egyptologist by profession. He told me that the lawyer Zarudnyi, Mendel Beilis'[5] defence counsel, was his uncle and that pro-Jewish sentiment had always filled their home. He will soon visit Palestine in order to study the situation and establish ties with scientific institutions. Afterwards he will draft a memorandum for Moscow in order to clarify matters which are not sufficiently understood and to refute widespread notions about us. His remarks exhibited great friendliness and readiness to help forge closer understanding between Soviet Russia and us.

Solod, too, was extremely courteous throughout all my conversations with him during my last visit to Cairo, and even if he did not go beyond the cautiousness of a Soviet representative, his behaviour reinforced the impression left by what he told me on a previous visit, namely that they want to know more about us than they did in the past; that in fact they never had a negative attitude towards Zionism (!), and if they persecuted Zionists it was because they had exceeded the bounds of permissible political activity in Soviet Russia; that Soviet government policy pursued a *realpolitik* and that their attitude towards religion could serve as an example of their consideration for elements which they had formerly dismissed.

Whatever the final outcome of our relations with the Russians – which we began to foster systematically this spring through their legation in Cairo – I believe it is very important to pursue the matter unflaggingly even if these ties have so far produced meagre concrete results.

E.E.

39
I.V. Samylovskii to V.G. Dekanozov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.7, P.4, D.5, L.6A
Moscow, 18 September 1944
Secret

To the Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Comrade V.G. Dekanozov,

I draw your attention to the enclosed letter from the chairman of the Palestinian Central Union of Jewish Immigrants from Warsaw which has been received by our legation in Cairo.[1]

Doc. 38

5. Mendel Beilis, victim of a ritual murder libel in Russia in 1911, was acquitted after a long trial. One of his lawyers was A.S. Zarudnyi.

Doc. 39

1. Enclosure is on file.

The immigrant union's proposal to organize the despatch to the USSR of individual charitable parcels for Jewish refugees from Warsaw, with customs dues being paid in Palestine, is unacceptable because it contravenes article 154 of our customs regulations, which allows for the transmission of charitable parcels only if they are handed over to the Special Commission of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade of the USSR for distribution.

Proposals to send a special delegate to Warsaw via the USSR in order to organize the documentation of German atrocities against the Jews of Warsaw and to deal with all matters concerning the Jews of Warsaw and its surrounding districts are a repetition of the Palestinian Zionist circles' frequent efforts to establish ties with the USSR, and to use these links to step up the struggle against the Arabs and to further the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine.

In view of the above, I think that the letter of the immigrants' union may be left unanswered; we should inform our legation in Cairo of this, and propose that the legation send us a detailed description of the said union.

Director of the Middle East Department
Samylovskii

40
A.F. Sultanov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

DIARY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.7, P.3, D.2, LL.1–4
[Cairo] 11 October 1944
Secret

CONVERSATION WITH MUSA AL-ALAMI, DELEGATE OF THE PALESTINIAN ARABS TO THE CONFERENCE CONVENED BY THE PAN-ARAB CONGRESS[1]

The Arab Conference and the Palestine Question

Musa al-Alami is very pleased with the results of the conference. He considers that it has provided a basis for Arab unity. The conference concluded that at present the most appropriate framework for Arab unity would be the creation of a League of Arab States, and that this was appropriate to the level of economic and political development of these countries. At this time it would be difficult to speak of Arab unification in the sense of political unity between Arab countries. But what we have achieved fully justifies the hopes which all

1. The Preparatory Committee for the Arab League met in Alexandria (Egypt), 25 September–7 October 1944. All seven sovereign Arab states, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen were represented. The Palestinian Arabs were represented by Musa al-Alami in an observer status. At the end of the deliberations the participants signed a protocol that called for formation of a League of Arab States whose main task would be to safeguard the sovereignty and independence of the Arab states and to uphold Arab rights in Palestine, as embodied in the 1939 White Paper.

the Arab countries placed on this conference. It has laid the foundation of future pan-Arab unity.

In the past, the British stated, through [their] Foreign Secretary Eden, that they were ready to support the idea of Arab unity.[2] But when they said this, so far as al-Alami knows, they had no idea that the Arab countries would achieve the degree of unity expressed in the minutes of the conference. The British have not yet made public their attitude to the conference resolutions. They may yet make some vague statement, but they could not have assumed that the representatives of the various Arab countries would reach such agreement in the political, economic and cultural fields.

One of the basic questions at the conference was Palestine. The Palestine problem is of interest to all Arab countries, and so it was quite natural that it should be the subject of exhaustive discussion. The Arab countries came to the conclusion that the Palestine problem was a pan-Arab problem, and that all Arab states were ready to support the Palestinian Arabs in their basic demands.

When I said that the British White Paper served as a basis for the conference's resolutions on the Palestine problem, al-Alami made this comment: Many people think that is the case, but it is not true, because, apart from the White Paper, there is another document, which has not been made public, namely the agreement between the Palestinian Arabs and the British in Baghdad in 1940, when the British were hard pressed and made concessions, accepting the Arabs' demand for the immediate establishment of a local government in Palestine, headed by the high commissioner, for the duration of the war, on condition that six months after the end of the war the Palestine Legislative Council could elect a head of government, Jewish immigration would be stopped, and Palestine would be given self-government.[3]

Once again, however, the British did not keep their promise.

The conference resolutions are thus based on the need for the British not only to carry out the commitments undertaken in the White Paper but also to fulfil the Baghdad agreement of 1940. They are well aware of this agreement, but they do not talk about it.

To the question of how he assesses the strength of the Zionists in Palestine, al-Alami said: 'In general the White Paper has long been violated by the British and the Jews. According to the White Paper, in the course of five years Palestine was to accept another 75,000 Jews, so that in 1944 there would be

---

2. British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden declared on 27 May 1941: 'Arabs generally agree that some form of "Arab federation" is desirable, and I think that we should not only refrain from opposing such vague aspirations, but even take every opportunity of expressing publicly our support for them' (see Eden's memorandum in Cohen, *Palestine and Arab Federation*, pp. 106–7).
3. The British ambassador to Iraq, Sir Kinahan Cornwallis, in a letter to Eden, dated 5 November 1944, gives the following interpretation to the episode: 'Jamal Husayni...had actually, despite Amin Husayni's threats, initialled the White Paper (with trifling reservations), together with Musa al-Alami in Nuri Pasha's house in May 1940' (see the document in Cohen, *Palestine and Arab Federation*, p. 253).

475,000 Jews in Palestine, since there were 400,000 there in 1939. However, according to Arab data, there are now not 475,000 but 750,000 or, according to the understated Jewish data, 650,000 Jews in Palestine. It follows that the conditions laid down in the White Paper for Jewish immigration have not only been met but even been exceeded. Moreover, there has been an undercover migration to Palestine of greater numbers than were envisaged in the agreement. The British pretend not to notice this, although of course they know all about it. Further, it was the British themselves who trained the Jews to use arms, supposedly to defend the Jewish colony against the Arabs. According to data in al-Alami's possession, the Jews have at present trained reserves amounting to no fewer than 100,000 men. They get most of their arms through the British. The British maintain that they do not send arms to the Jews, but they connive in the Zionists' illegal acquisition of arms through British commissariats in the Middle East.

The actions of individual Zionist extremists against individual representatives of the British authorities in Palestine are intended to show the Arab world and the British that the Jews are a force to be reckoned with. The British could have crushed them long ago, but they deliberately do not do so, in order to show the Arabs that the Jewish organizations are strong and to make us more compliant to British demands, or rather to frighten us so much with the Zionist danger that the Palestinian Arabs will ask the British to stay in Palestine forever.

However, the Arabs are not afraid of the Zionist organizations, and demand self-government and the departure of the British from Palestine. The Arabs are convinced that they can cope with the Zionists, however well they are armed. They also believe that there can be a peaceful settlement with the Jews if the British leave Palestine.

Al-Alami says that the Arabs place great hopes on certain Arab states, as they do on the Allied peace conference and especially on the Soviet Union. They know very well that the Soviet Union is not an interested party in this matter, has no imperialistic designs on the Arab states, and has a negative attitude to the Zionist movement. Therefore the Palestinian Arabs place great hopes on the Soviet Union's position at the peace conference. They had intended to send a delegation of two or three persons to the Soviet Union in this connection but were not given permission.

Al-Alami thinks that stabilization in the Arab Middle East is impossible unless the Palestinian Arab problem is resolved in favour of the Arabs, who are convinced that the interests of the Soviet Union also require support for the Arabs' just demands at the peace conference.

I asked al-Alami whether the cabinet reshuffle in Egypt[4] would have any effect on the conference decisions. He said no, and remarked that they had

4. On 9 October, Ahmad Maher Pasha, leader of the Saadist party, formed a new coalition cabinet, replacing Mustafa Nahas of the Wafd. The new prime minister declared his firm support of the Allied cause and his adherence to the principles of the Atlantic Charter.

had a number of meetings with the members of the new cabinet, including Prime Minister Ahmad Maher Pasha, and also with King Faruq, who promised his full support in this matter. In particular, a number of commissions were now being formed on economic, cultural and political questions; the members of the new cabinet promised to support their work fully.

'Of course', he said, 'there may be various obstacles to the implementation of the conference resolutions, but whatever the obstacles to the unity of the Arab countries and to cooperation between them, my colleagues and I came away from the conference convinced that there is a real opportunity for cooperation among the Arab countries.' Although the representatives of Saudi Arabia and Yemen did not sign the minutes of the conference, they took part in all its work and were convinced that these minutes would in due course be approved by Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

Referring in some detail to economic cooperation among Arab states, al-Alami said that it was intended to abolish customs duties among Arab states on locally produced goods and also to fix a single customs rate on goods of foreign origin in order to end the smuggling of foreign goods from one Arab state to another, which is seriously disrupting these states' economies.[5]

Second Secretary of Legation
Sultanov

41
L. Kubovitzky to Y. Gruenbaum (Jerusalem)

COPY: CZA S25/5208
New York, 15 October 1944

Dear Yitzhak Gruenbaum,

Your cable[1] concerning Oswięcim [Auschwitz] reached me with a considerable delay. I trust you have already received the message I sent you through the War Refugee Board.[2]

I have repeatedly discussed, orally and in writing, the matter of the camps with Mr. John J. McCloy, assistant secretary of war. He assured me on September 28, that the Allied Mediterranean Commander had been fully informed of the situation obtaining in the death camp areas and promised that the War

---

Doc. 40

5. Handwritten note in the margin: 'To Comrade Shvedov. Acquaint Comrade Shchiborin. 21. 11. 44, I. Samylovskii.'

Doc. 41

1. This cable not traced, but see Doc. 38.
2. US government agency established in January 1944 to assist and rescue war victims.

Department would once more call his attention to the gravity of the recent developments. He advised me, however, to ask our friends in London to press the matter with the British War Office, which is in a better position to advise General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson on the steps which could be taken. I informed our London friends accordingly, and trust that they have taken up the question with the British War Office.

I also discussed with Mr. Aleksandr Kapustin, counsellor at the Soviet embassy, our suggestion concerning the use of Soviet paratroopers for the destruction of the installations. Mr. Kapustin informed me that the Ambassador had already cabled to Moscow on this matter after the talk he had had with Dr. Goldmann, and promised to convey anew to Moscow our recent information and our request.

A few days ago I was informed by Mr. Jan Masaryk that he had taken up the matter with several Allied governments and that the difficulties are considerable.

The new warning, dealing specifically with the reported plans to wipe out the camps and their inmates, which has been issued recently by our State Department, has been reported by the press. I understand that it had been requested by the Polish government.

Dr. Schwarzbart informed me on September 8 that the Polish Council of Ministers decided on August 25 to ask 'the commander of Home Army to consider the possibilities of destroying the concentration camps and freeing the political prisoners before they are murdered and deported' and that 'appropriate orders were issued by the commander in chief. It seems, however, that the Polish Home Army is in no position to carry out the instructions it has been given.

Sincerely yours,

Leon Kubovitzky

42
M. Shertok and E. Dobkin to A.M. Kukin (London)

TEL: CZA S 25/5208
[Jerusalem] 20 November 1944

Reference our interview September glad be able report that first consignment relief goods consisting 2507 pairs shoes 1172 pullovers 1600 stockings 1388 underwears 8000 pyjamas sent by Palestine Jewish Rescue Committee[1] delivered Teheran Soviet representative who promised arrange immediate transportation Lublin for benefit Jewish survivors at Dr. Sommerstein's[2] disposal. Take opportunity thanking you for sympathetic interest.

Shertok, Dobkin

43
I.V. Samylovskii and A.D. Shchiborin to V.G. Dekanozov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.7, P.4, D.5, LL.26–28
Moscow, 25 November 1944
Secret

To Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Comrade V. G. Dekanozov,

RE: OUR ATTITUDE TO THE PAN-ARAB FEDERATION[1]
AND THE CREATION OF A JEWISH STATE IN PALESTINE

1. The Arabs' efforts to unite and to create a United Arab Federation are incited and supported by the British in so far as it suits their plans to reinforce their influence in the Middle East and to establish a barrier against any possible penetration of Soviet influence there. This movement encompasses only the ruling group and the intelligentsia among the Arabs, and the leaders of the movement are undoubtedly pro-British.

Doc. 42
1. The Jewish Agency in Palestine established this body on 30 November 1942 with the participation of other *yishuv* bodies. Headed by Yitzhak Gruenbaum, it assisted Jewish refugees and aroused public opinion to the plight of European Jewry.
2. See Doc. 37 and n. 4 there.

Doc. 43
1. See Doc. 40.

Since in fact none of the Arab countries is really an independent state, any sort of unification among them is possible only under the aegis of a ruling power, which at present is Britain.

To judge from a number of facts, the attitude of the Americans to such unification is negative. This is affirmed by Roosevelt's statement on the possibility of creating a Jewish state in Palestine,[2] which was made just at the time of increased pan-Arab activity in the Middle East, and also by the fact that at the conference in Alexandria the delegates of Saudi Arabia and the Yemen (where there is now increasing American influence) arrived only after a special invitation by all the other delegates who were already assembled, and even then the Saudis and Yemenis did not sign the conference resolutions.

Taking all this into account, we believe that our position on the Pan-Arab Federation at the present time should be as follows:

We cannot publicly support these aspirations, but at the same time we must not tie ourselves down by any direct declaration of our negative attitude towards them, so as not to provoke a hostile reaction by the ruling groups in the Arab countries, the Arab press and the British. Therefore we must not raise these questions in discussions in Cairo, and if they are raised by our interlocutors, we should avoid discussion of them.

2. Zionist organizations in Palestine are making every effort to establish links with our missions in the Middle East, reckoning that they will gain the support of the USSR for the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine.

However, rendering such support will undoubtedly evoke an unfavourable reaction from the Arab population, not only in Palestine but in all the other Arab countries. Moreover, the British, in view of the recent assassination of Lord Moyne in Cairo[3] are at present disinclined to promise anything which would alter the existing status of Palestine as a mandated territory.

We have considerable property interests in Palestine, namely that of the former Russian government, the Ecclesiastical Mission and the Palestine Society,[4] which ought to be returned to the Soviet state. A successful resolution of this question can be reached only if the British attitude is favourable, since

2. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in a letter to Senator Robert F. Wagner dated 15 October 1944, asked to convey the following message to the delegates of the 47th annual convention of the Zionist Organization of America: 'I know how long and ardently the Jewish people worked and prayed for the establishment of Palestine as a free and democratic Jewish commonwealth. I am convinced that the American people give their support to this aim, and if re-elected I shall help to bring about its realization' (see *FRUS*, 1944, Vol. V, pp. 615–16).
3. The British minister resident in the Middle East, Lord Moyne, was assassinated on 6 November 1944 by members of the Jewish militant underground organization Lehi (also known as the Stern Group), which rejected the decision to postpone the struggle against the British for the duration of the war.
4. The Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society founded in 1882 in St. Petersburg under the chairmanship of Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich. The society's aim was to promote pilgrimage and gather information on Christian holy places in the East. In 1918 the Soviet government nationalized the assets of the society. Its property in Palestine became a subject of protracted controversy between the governments of the USSR and Britain and later, Israel. Under the British Mandate the society was known as the Orthodox Palestine Society and was administered by Russian émigrés. In 1948 the USSR declared the Moscow-based Russian Palestine Society, initially established as an academic body, responsible for controlling the assets of the former Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society in Israel.

they have charge of this property at present. Taking account of this, it would not be to our advantage at present to make any promises of support for the Jews, which the British would take as a move against them.

We therefore believe that our legations' links with various Jewish organizations and individual public figures should be limited to cultural relations through VOKS; and we should make no statements in support of the idea of creating a Jewish state.

Our main attention in Palestine should be concentrated on the return of all Russian property.[5]

Director of the Near East Department
Samylovskii
USSR Minister in Egypt
A. Shchiborin

44
Report on the Meeting of Soviet and Palestinian Trade Union Delegates in London[1]

COPY: CZA S25/15349
London, 25 February 1945

Comrades Locker, Oren and Idelson on behalf of the Palestinian delegation to the conference, had an official meeting with Comrades Tarasov, Komas and Kuznetsov, representing the Soviet delegation.

Locker thanked the Soviet delegation for their support of our demands concerning Palestine, and expressed the hope that the attitude taken by the Soviet representatives at the conference would have an influence on their country's policy on this question. Locker also voiced the great esteem felt by the Jewish workers in Palestine for the USSR and recalled the assistance sent by them to Tehran for the Red Army.[2] In the name of the Executive Committee of the Histadrut he invited the Soviet delegation to visit Palestine.

Doc. 43

5. The following handwritten note is appended to the bottom of the document: 're yours 1049, sent on 2nd December [19]44, Doc. 808. Tell the Iraqi [delegate] that no Soviet official representatives, let alone the Sov[iet] gov[ernment], authorized Ben-Gurion to make a statement in the name of the USSR. When occasion arises, tell same to the Min[ister] of For[eign] Aff[airs] and bear this in mind in your contacts with Arab public figures. [Signed]: I. Sam[ylovskii], 4.12. Concerning J[ewish] home in Palestine, if England and US support, the USSR will do the same.'

Doc. 44

1. The founding conference of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) took place in London in February 1945. On 16 February, the conference passed a resolution which gave the United Nations responsibility for protecting Jews the world over against oppression, discrimination, and displacement, and declared that the Jewish people must be enabled to continue in the construction of Palestine as its national home. The Soviet delegation voted in favour of this resolution (see Ro'i, 'Soviet Policy in the Middle East', p. 405).
2. See Doc. 27 and n. 4 there.

In reply, Comrade Tarasov stated that the Soviet delegation to the conference represented the interests not only of the workers of the USSR but also of the working class in other countries. He stressed the need for the exchange of information and contact between the trade unions in the USSR and those in Palestine. Comrade Tarasov expressed his gratitude for the aid which had been given to the Red Army and for the invitation to pay a visit to Palestine, which unfortunately, for technical reasons, could not be arranged at the present time. 'If the Histadrut sends an official invitation to the trade unions of the USSR', he continued 'their executive committee will certainly accept such an invitation willingly.'

Tarasov asked the Palestinian delegates to convey warmest greetings from the Soviet delegation to the Histadrut.

45
N.F. Paisov to A.Ia Vyshinskii (Moscow)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.8, P.4, D.2, LL.3–4
Moscow, 22 March 1945
Secret

Called on the Yugoslav chargé d'affaires, 22 March 1945.[1]

[...][2] Nikolaevic told me something of what he had seen in Palestine. He was posted to Moscow about two months ago and until then had been the consul in Jerusalem. The popularity of the USSR in Palestine, he said, is growing day by day, and I am astonished that the Soviet government is not represented there. There are many Jewish immigrants from Russia living in Palestine, and there are also many Russian monasteries, which come under the jurisdiction of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission.[3] Whereas many monks and

1. R. Nikolaevic, the Yugoslav chargé d'affaires, had been interviewed in Turkey on 29 December 1944 by the first secretary of the Soviet embassy there, Sergei Mikhailov, on his way to Moscow. The latter wrote in his diary: 'I have asked Nikolaevic about the situation in Palestine. He spoke a great deal, however, all in the vein of "the British are currently persecuting the Jews and protecting the Arabs." It was obvious that he was under great Zionist influence and was promoting the views of the Zionists, and that his information on Palestine therefore could not really be objective' (see AVP RF, f.0118, op.8, p.4, d.3, l.1).
2. A section dealing with unrelated matters has been omitted.
3. In the wake of the October Revolution and the subsequent Civil War, some Russian bishops fled Russia and took refuge first in Constantinople and then in Sremski Karlovci (Yugoslavia) as guests of the Serbian patriarch. Headed by the Metropolitan Antonii of Kiev, they proclaimed themselves to be the Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration outside of Russia and justified their action, citing Patriarch Tikhon's decree of 20 November 1920 which permitted dioceses separated by front lines to function independently. The Orthodox Church in the USSR referred to the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad as the Karlovci group. The Ecclesiastical Mission in Palestine belonged to this group.

nuns are wholly loyal to the USSR, this mission is headed by a man who is extremely hostile to the USSR, namely Archimandrite Antonii. Antonii is a Russian émigré, who graduated from the Divinity Faculty in Belgrade and then came to Jerusalem. When Belgrade was liberated, Nikolaevic asked him to recite the liturgy in the Orthodox Church in Jerusalem, but Antonii refused, saying that Belgrade had been liberated by the godless Red Army, and that therefore he would not recite it. Nikolaevic heard once that in church Antonii had mentioned the Tsar Nicholas, 'murdered by the Bolsheviks'. Nikolaevic said that there was no place for such a 'living anachronism' in Jerusalem. I agreed with him.

Nikolaevic said that in Jerusalem he was president of the All-Slav Committee;[4] Grigorii Kurilas, a former Orthodox priest from Lvov, was vice-president. When Anders'[5] army was evacuated from the USSR, Kurilas was taken to Iraq, but was subsequently deemed 'suspect' and arrested, and later sent to Jerusalem, where he was appointed a parish priest. When Antonii learned that he was working in the All-Slav Committee, he gave orders for Kurilas to be removed from the flat which the Orthodox community had allocated to him and threatened to sack him. Kurilas is now in a desperate state and would very much like to return to Lvov but does not know what to do to achieve this.

I told Nikolaevic that I would report the facts which he had related to my superiors.

The conversation lasted about an hour.[6]

Assistant Director of the Fourth European Department
N. Paisov

4. The Soviet Information Bureau (Sovinformburo) set up five anti-fascist committees at the end of 1941: the All-Slav Committee, the JAFC and committees of women, youth and scientists. All these took an active part in the Soviet propaganda effort during World War II. The All-Slav Committee had branches in many countries.
5. In March 1942 the Polish army formed on Soviet territory under the command of Lt. General Władysław Anders left the USSR for the Middle East (see Doc. 4, n. 2 and Doc. 111 and n. 2 there).
6. Copies were sent to Vyshinskii and Dekanozov.

46
S.I. Kavtaradze to V.I. Molotov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.8, P.4, D.2, LL.9–10
Moscow, 31 March 1945
Secret

To Comrade V.M. Molotov,

ON THE NEED TO OPEN A SOVIET CONSULATE IN PALESTINE[1]

According to data for 1944, the US, Turkey and Saudi Arabia have consulates-general in Palestine, while Bolivia, Cuba, Denmark, Egypt, Spain, Honduras, Iraq, Iran, Mexico and Switzerland have consulates.[2] Paraguayan interests in Palestine are represented by the consulate-general in Beirut, and Swedish interests by the consulate-general in Cairo.

Before the revolution Russia, too, had three consulates in Palestine:

1. The consulate in Jerusalem was opened in 1858, and became a consulate-general in 1893.
2. There was a consulate in Haifa (precise date of opening unknown).
3. In Jaffa there was a vice-consulate from 1882, which became a consulate in 1893.

In November 1914, when diplomatic relations were broken off between Russia and Turkey, all the Russian consulates in the Near East were closed, and since then there have been no official Russian representatives in Palestine.

At present we have very little information about Palestine, although the need for it is felt more acutely with every passing day. The so-called 'Palestine problem', according to our legations in Egypt and Syria, is closely entangled with all the most important postwar problems of the Near East.

Palestine is situated on important global communication lines. It is expected that major new oil pipelines will pass through Palestinian territory, and for this reason, British and American capital is showing an increased interest in Palestine.

The need for us to be represented in Jerusalem, or in some other place in Palestine, is dictated by the following considerations:

1. the need to monitor British and American policy in the region;
2. our own direct property interests, which amount to as much as one million pounds sterling;[3]

---

1. See Doc. 25.
2. Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia also had consulates in Palestine (see Doc. 45).
3. In the second half of the nineteenth century European churches and missions actively purchased lands in Palestine, then part of the Ottoman Empire. Russian properties acquired as of 1865 by the Ecclesiastical Mission and the Orthodox Palestine Society included lands and various buildings which served as hostels, churches, monasteries, a hospital and infirmaries (see Kark, 'Changing Patterns of Land Ownership in Nineteenth Century Palestine', p. 363).

3. the fact that more than two hundred Soviet citizens and several thousand emigrants from the Baltic Republics, Bessarabia and the western Ukraine who have the right to Soviet citizenship live there.

The attitude of the Palestinian population – Arab and Jew alike – to the USSR is friendly. Even Zionist circles with an anti-Soviet outlook, in light of the general situation, are now trying in every way to arrange official links with the USSR.

In 1944 an office for the establishment of trade and economic relations with Britain, America and the USSR was set up in Palestine. In Tel Aviv and other towns in Palestine there are newspapers and periodicals in Russian. VOKS organizes exhibitions from time to time, a Pan-Slav Committee has been established,[4] and so on.

Taking all this into account, I feel that we should open a Soviet consulate in Palestine and that negotiations about this with the British Foreign Office should be entrusted to our ambassador in London, Comrade Gusev.

I shall be grateful for your instructions.[5]

S. Kavtaradze

47
M.J. Mendelson to I.V. Stalin (Moscow)

TEL: AP RF, F.3, OP.65, D.7, L.23
New York, 8 April 1945

Your Excellency,

We appeal to you to instruct your delegation to the conference in San Francisco[1] to demand that an international pledge made to the Jewish people, that Palestine would be restored to its historic borders as a Jewish national homeland, be honoured without delay, and that the mandated status of the country be replaced by that of a Jewish state. The Jewish people are quite ready to accept a temporary regime of international control, if necessary.

Doc. 46

4. See Doc. 45.
5. Typewritten note at the left top of the first page of the document: 'Comrade. A.Ia. Vyshinskii. Addressed to you by order of Comrade Molotov. Podtserob 14.4.' Annotation in the margin: 'Prepare a draft of resolution, A. V[yshinskii] 15.4.' and 'To Comrade Samylovskii. S[ergei] K[avtaradze], 16.4'. indicating that the following day Kavtaradze passed the document on to Samylovskii, his underling.

Doc. 47

1. The Constituent Assembly of the United Nations which took place in San Francisco, 25 April to 25 June 1945. Representatives of 51 states participated and it dealt with the formulation of the United Nations Charter.

We ask you also to insist that Jewish representatives be invited to San Francisco on equal terms with other large and small nations, whose problems ought to be considered with their direct and active participation. We ask this in the name of justice and equity, in order to eliminate the Jewish problem from the international arena once and for all and to end the constant threat which it poses to public order and universal peace. Informed American and world public opinion fully supports this attitude.

I shall be most grateful for your reply.[2]

Colonel Morris J. Mendelson
President of the New Zionist Organization of America[3]

48
N. Goldmann to A.A. Gromyko (New York)

TEL: CZA Z6/2262
[New York] 13 April 1945

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

I had been eager to see you and discuss with you some matters relating to San Francisco, but I understand that is impossible with your crowded calendar. I will probably be in San Francisco in the beginning of May and hope to have the opportunity to see you there.[1]

I want to draw your attention to the plight of Jewish immigrants to Palestine, who have certificates from the Palestine administration, from Romania and Bulgaria.[2] You will recall that when I made inquiries about the attitude of the Russian authorities concerning permission for these Jews to leave, you informed me that if they were Romanian or Bulgarian citizens there

---

Doc. 47

2. No answer has been traced. Jewish and Zionist representatives attended the San Francisco conference in an unofficial capacity (see Docs. 48, 49). In addition to this telegram, there are in the Presidential Archives in Moscow many telegrams of Latin American Zionist organizations addressed to Stalin. There is, however, no evidence of any answer or of any action taken on them.
3. Established in 1935 when its members, known as 'revisionists', left the World Zionist Organization.

Doc. 48

1. See Doc. 47, n. 1; Doc. 49.
2. Soviet troops liberated Romania and Bulgaria beginning in August 1944. Emigration to Palestine, organized 'illegally', started immediately after the liberation. Ben-Gurion made a trip to Romania and Bulgaria in November–December 1944 to investigate the situation of the Jewish communities there (see Ro'i, 'Soviet Policy in the Middle East', p. 402). On 22 January 1945 Goldmann approached the Soviet embassy in Washington with reference to difficulties encountered by Romanian Jewish refugees at the Bulgarian–Turkish border. He received an official reply that the Soviet government had no objection to Balkan Jews leaving for Palestine (see 'Goldmann to the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem', 22 January 1945, CZA S25/486; Doc. 50).

was no objection to their leaving for Palestine. We were gratified by the position taken by your government, but it appears that the situation has not changed. The immigrants in question have their certificates and transit visas arranged for them, but they cannot get exit visas.

We are informed by the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem that it is essential that permission be granted to leave on behalf of the Allied Military Control Commission[3] and, primarily, on behalf of your authorities, otherwise exit visas cannot be obtained. I need not tell you what it means to get those for whom we have received certificates into Palestine, or what it means for those who cannot make a living in Romania and whose only hope is to be able to start a new life in Palestine.

May I add that the same situation prevails in Hungary and the same permission to leave is necessary for the exit of those Hungarian Jews who have certificates for Palestine.

May I request that you communicate with your government and submit our request that permission be granted by your authorities in Romania and Bulgaria for certificated Jews to leave for Palestine. The same request applies to Hungary. I should be most grateful if this communication would be cabled and if you would let us hear from you as soon as you have a reply.[4]

Sincerely yours,

Nahum Goldmann

49
N. Goldmann to A.A. Gromyko (San Francisco)

TEL: CZA Z6/2298
[New York] 30 May 1945

Report in today's *New York Times* indicated that Soviet delegation intends proposing elimination paragraph five trusteeship plan.[1] This paragraph pending further decisions safeguards rights of all including rights of Jewish people under existing mandate. First part of paragraph five leaves the way open for

---

Doc. 48

3. The body controlling civil and military life in Romania after the armistice of 2 September was actually dominated by the Soviets.
4. See Doc. 50.

Doc. 49

1. Reference is to the report from the UN Constituent Conference in San Francisco by James Reston, 'Nation Gets Vote on Use of Force If It Supplies Men'. Clause five upheld the status quo and was seen by many as a means of ensuring the rights of Palestinian Jews. Moscow suggested that the clause be eliminated altogether, but faced US objections. The clause was ultimately incorporated in the UN Charter as Article 80. Regarding the Soviet position on trusteeship for Palestine, see Docs. 51 and 69.

further decisions regarding arrangements and disposition of these territories and provides all necessary flexibility in this respect. The effect of the paragraph as a whole is while avoiding any freezing of status of these territories meanwhile to preserve existing rights. Jewish people everywhere have keenly appreciated support hitherto given this proposal by Soviet representatives. Its elimination at this time would be clearly prejudicial to our rights and might be misunderstood and misinterpreted. Am confident Soviet government has no such intention and for that reason we earnestly urge against any action tending towards elimination this safeguarding paragraph.

Regards.

Nahum Goldmann

50
B. Locker to A.M. Kukin (London)

COPY: CZA Z4/10138
London, 10 June 1945

Dear Mr. Kukin,

May I now put before you in writing the problem which I discussed with you last Friday?

There are thousands of Jews in Romania and Bulgaria who long to be able to emigrate to Palestine.[1] Their position in those countries appears to be still very difficult, although the discriminatory laws have, of course, been abolished. After all they have gone through under the old regimes, and especially since Romania and Bulgaria joined the Axis, it is extremely difficult for them to adapt themselves again to life in those countries. Their economic position is ruined, and their families, especially in Romania, largely broken up. On the other hand, many of them have relatives in Palestine who would be eager and able to help them to economic independence again there. Some of the younger people have gone through preparatory training for agricultural and industrial life in Palestine.

As you will recall, some hundreds of these people were allowed, some months back, to leave Romania via Bulgaria, and you yourself were good enough to make enquiries with regard to certain difficulties (subsequently removed) which arose in connection with their passage of the Bulgaro-Turkish frontier. But now, for some months past, it has been impossible to leave Romania or Bulgaria for Palestine, the Jewish Agency has allotted about 1200 certificates to these two countries, but they cannot be used because of these difficulties.

---

1. See Doc. 48.

It is hard for us to understand why such difficulties should arise, and we believe that if your government or its representative on the Inter-Allied Control Commission, would intervene with the appropriate authorities, the obstacles could be removed. May I ask you, on purely humanitarian grounds, to convey this request to your government? As the problem is now many months old, further delay can only cause additional suffering, and we should therefore be extremely grateful for immediate action.[2]

Yours sincerely,

B. Locker

51
Memorandum of the Commission for Preparation of Peace Agreements and Postwar Settlement[1]

COPY: AVP RF, F.07, OP.12A, P.42, D.6, LL.1, 29–38
Moscow, 27 July 1945
Top Secret

THE PALESTINE QUESTION

Statistical and Geographical Data[2]

Palestine is located on the south-eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. It borders Transjordan in the east, Syria in the north and north-east, and Egypt in the south-west. Its area is 26,158 sq. km. The population (according to data for 1937) was 1,383,000, of which 61 per cent were Arabs, 29 per cent Jews and 10 per cent other nationalities. In 1936 imports into Palestine amounted to £13,900,000 sterling, and exports £3,625,000. About 80 per cent of total exports (in value terms) consist of citrus fruits. The remainder is made up of potash, soap, knitted goods, olive oil and wine. Imports consist of food products, wood products, mineral fuels, cotton, metals and metal products, electrical appliances, machinery and other industrial equipment. Until 1937 the largest quantity of imports came from Great Britain, but in 1937 Germany took first place. Exports went mainly to Great Britain.

Doc. 50

2. No reply has been traced.

Doc. 51

1. The Commission for Preparation of Peace Agreements and Postwar Settlement operated at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the chairmanship of Litvinov, 1943–45. The commission invited 28 memoranda by experts on various subjects.
2. The section 'Statistical and Geographical Data' is reproduced *in toto* from the entry 'Palestine', *Bol'shaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia* (Moscow, 1939), Vol. 43, pp. 816, 817, 820.

Sixty-seven per cent of the inhabitants of Palestine are engaged in agriculture (farming and cattle breeding). There are about one million hectares of arable land. Of this area 450,000 hectares belong to the large landowners (Arab feudal lords), and 90,000 hectares to the state. There is also much land belonging to the *waqf* ([Islamic] religious institutions).

[...]

In November 1944, four Arab organizations (the Arab Federation, the Arab Union, the Muslim Youth Society and the Muslim Brotherhood)[3] sent a special appeal to President Roosevelt, which stated:

> No other country in the world has experienced such great injustice as Palestine. Palestine is an Arab country, and by the will of God and of its population will always remain so. Seventy million Arabs and three hundred million Muslims support the Palestinian Arabs, and are fully determined to shed their blood and sacrifice their lives to support the Arab cause. Neither the Balfour Declaration nor the statements of other political figures who are under Jewish influence will ever alter these historic factors or force the Arabs and Muslims to change their position or renounce the defence of Palestine, so that it will remain an Arab country for Arabs.[4]

The Essence of the Jewish–Arab–British Disagreements

The Jews' yearning for Palestine, the 'land of their ancestors', has existed from time immemorial. The Jews' expectation of the coming of the Messiah was always connected with the idea of their return to Palestine. At one time this 'Palestinophile' movement was of a religious-mystical character. Many Orthodox Jews dreamed of moving to Palestine in their old age, in order to die there, believing that this would have a favourable effect on their lives in the next world, and they did in fact realize this dream. The more enlightened among the nationalistically inclined Jews aimed at turning Palestine into a spiritual centre for Jewry. The development of antisemitism at the end of the 19th century in Russia, Germany, Austro-Hungary and Romania, and the pogroms against Jews in southern Russia gave the Palestine movement a more

3. On 19 November 1944 approximately 500 people assembled in Cairo at the Young Muslim Association building to protest against US policy towards Palestine. The text of the assembly's telegram to Roosevelt was signed by six organizations: the Arab Union Society, the Young Men's Muslim Association, the Executive Committee of the International Parliamentary Union Conference, al-Ihwan al-Muslimin [Muslim Brotherhood], Muslim Sufi Sects and the Higher Committee for the Defence of Palestine.

4. An entire unabridged version of this piece is printed in *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 5, p. 639. The two salient paragraphs read: '2. No country in the world has suffered a greater injustice than Palestine. From time immemorial it has been an Arab country. Jews entered it as invaders and only occupied it for a short time; for they were constantly at war with the aborigines [*sic*], and other invaders soon drove them out until the Arabs, more than thirteen centuries ago, finally liberated the country and settled it. 3. Palestine is, by the will of God and the patriotism of its people, an Arab country and will forever remain so. Seventy million Arabs, supported by three hundred million Muslims, are determined to redeem it with their lives. Neither the Balfour Declaration, nor declarations of statesmen and the power of Zionism employing various measures of force and coercion can change the course of history or dissuade Arabs from defending Palestine and checking the tide of Zionism.'

earthly character. Jewish craftsmen and other petty-bourgeois elements began to seek in Palestine a refuge from persecution in their homeland, for which they benefited from the charity of richer Jews.

Palestinophilism or, as it began to be called, Zionism, acquired a political hue after the appearance of Dr. Herzl's pamphlet *Judenstaat.* Herzl asserted that there would be no end to antisemitism until the Jews had their own territory; meanwhile they would be citizens without a motherland and an alien element in all countries. What was needed was to create a legitimate Jewish state, to which a significant part of Jewry, if not the whole of it, could migrate. If that were done, Jews who remained in other countries, but became citizens of their own Jewish state, would enjoy diplomatic protection from the latter, just as do other foreigners in various states. Thanks to Herzl's extraordinary energy and that of his numerous followers in all countries of the world (Max Nordau in France, Supreme Court Justice Brandeis in the US, Professors Mandel'shtam, Ussishkin, Kogan-Bernstein and others in Russia), the Zionist movement developed on a large scale. Herzl left no stone unturned with the Turkish and various other governments, but failed to gain international recognition of an autonomous Jewish state under the Sultan's sovereignty. The British government was the first to meet the Zionist movement halfway with the above-mentioned Balfour Declaration in favour of a 'national home for the Jews' in Palestine.

There is every reason to suppose that in his declaration Balfour had in mind the realization in practice of the Zionist ideal, i.e., the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. Later, however, faced with Arab opposition, British politicians started 'clarifying' the Balfour Declaration to the effect that it was not at all about the creation of a Jewish state, but only about establishing a Jewish national home in a Palestinian state. For instance, already by 1920 Winston Churchill, who was then colonial secretary, issued a memorandum in which it was said that the 'nationality which will be given to all citizens of Palestine – Jews and non-Jews alike – will be Palestinian and no other, but the Jewish community will know that it is in Palestine by right, and not just on sufferance.'[5]

Of course the Jews do not agree with this interpretation but insist that the British government promised them a Jewish state, in which they alone would rule. They say that Jews are rushing to Palestine not in order to find themselves once again a minority among a foreign people; but, in order to become the majority; they demand unlimited Jewish immigration to Palestine. According to the statement made by British Colonial Secretary Malcolm MacDonald to the

5. Reference is to the 1922 statement usually called the Churchill White Paper. The sequence and wording of the original text are as follows: '2. A Jewish national home will be founded in Palestine. The Jewish people will be in Palestine as of right and not on sufferance. But His Majesty's government have no such aim in view as that Palestine should become as Jewish as England is English... 4. Status of all citizens of Palestine will be Palestinian. No section of the population will have any other status in the eyes of the law' (correspondence with the Palestine Arab delegation and the Zionist Organization. Cmd. 1700, 1922, p. 30).

Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, in 1919 there were about 635,000 Arabs and 58,000 Jews in Palestine, i.e., a total of 693,000 people, whereas at the end of March 1939, the population had already grown to 1,535,000, of which 1,113,000 were Arabs and 422,000 Jews.

As we have seen, the British government intends to limit the further immigration of Jews to 75,000.[6] This would mean a stabilization of the Jewish population as a minority, a situation in which there could be no question of establishing a Jewish state. The Palestinian state would be an Arab state.

No one denies the considerable achievements of Jewish colonization in Palestine. Thanks to the capital which the Jews brought in (mostly from philanthropic sources), a large part of the uncultivated land has been turned into fertile fields, marshes have been drained, the breeding-grounds for malaria have been destroyed, there has been much afforestation, health care has been improved, some industry has been developed, such as processing diamonds and extracting and treating chemical deposits from the Dead Sea, and electrification has been introduced. In 1942 the value of industrial production was £3,000,000 sterling. Apart from military supplies, Jewish industry in Palestine produces steel and iron goods, textiles, leather goods, food products, chemical and pharmaceutical goods, drainage pipes, glass, essential oils and lorries. The higher wages and improved standard of living have attracted up to 500,000 Arabs from neighbouring Arab countries.

The British government justifies the restriction of immigration on the grounds, *inter alia*, of the country's inadequate economic capacity. The Jews object to this, saying that even without displacing the local population, agriculture in the plains and hilly parts of Palestine can absorb as many as three to four million colonists, and the development of agriculture will result in a further growth of industry, which will absorb another three million people. Of course, if there are such possibilities, they will require a significant input of capital. It should be noted that Jewish colonization is still a philanthropic enterprise, and can provide for itself, according to British sources, being no more than 40 per cent self-sufficient or, according to Jewish sources, no more than 60 per cent. The US alone contributes 5.5 million dollars to Palestine annually.

The Arab population of Palestine will certainly resist further Jewish immigration with all its might, in which it will be supported by all the other Arab states and the newly formed Arab League.[7] From all this it is quite clear that the disagreements between the Jews, the Arabs and the British hinge on the permission for more Jews to settle in Palestine and to acquire land there.

There is a project for the creation of a Greater Syria, consisting of Syria, Iraq, Transjordan and the Arab areas of Palestine, leaving the rest of it as a

---

6. Reference is to the 1939 White Paper's provision of 75,000 immigration permits for the years 1939–44 (see Doc. 1, n. 7).
7. See Doc. 40, and n. 1 there. The Covenant of the League of Arab States was signed in Cairo on 22 March 1945.

Jewish state;[8] but there is no reason to believe that this plan will be greeted with any sympathy on the part of the independent Arab states or the Palestinian Arabs. The Labour peer, Lord Strabolgi, once said that the best solution to the question would be the inclusion of Palestine in the British empire as a dominion. It is possible that the Jews would prefer British to Arab rule, but dominion status implies self-government, and with an Arab majority in the population, the legislative and other state institutions would inevitably be in Arab hands. There are no other plans or projects for the solution of this complex Palestine problem.

Conclusions

1. Try as the British may to argue that their present policy is compatible with the Balfour Declaration, there is no doubt whatever that they have failed to carry out the conditions on which they were given the mandate, as has been admitted by the statements of responsible British statesmen. This situation fully justifies the removal of the mandate for Palestine from British hands.

2. The Palestine question cannot be satisfactorily resolved without infringing upon the rights and wishes either of the Jews or of the Arabs, or perhaps of both. The British government is under simultaneous pressure from the Arab states and from world Jewry. That is the source of its difficulties in finding the right way to solve the Palestine problem.

3. The US government is exposed to similar influences. Whereas Arab interests bear most strongly on British policy towards Palestine, the American government feels more strongly the influence of powerful American Jewry. It should be recalled that in the last presidential elections both parties, the Democratic and the Republican, felt obliged to publish declarations on their attitude to Palestine, in which they called for unlimited immigration and unrestricted land ownership for Jews in Palestine. At the same time, the US government will hardly want to quarrel with the Arabs, when the oil pipeline from Saudi Arabia, in which they are interested, will have to pass through hundreds of miles/kilometres of Arab territory. The American government therefore would be in almost as difficult a position as the British with regard to Palestine.

4. The solution to the Palestine problem might best be undertaken by the USSR, which is free of both Arab and Jewish influence. This gives it the right at least to put in a claim for temporary trusteeship over Palestine until a more radical solution of the problem is found.

---

8. Projects for a Greater Syria were discussed during World War II in two basic versions – a British one proposed by the Palestine Committee of the War Cabinet (20 December 1943) and an Iraqi one proposed by Nuri Said (14 January 1943). The former proposed creating an Association of Levant States consisting of a Jewish state, a Jerusalem Territory and Lebanon and a Greater Syria comprising Transjordan, a small portion of Lebanon and Arab Palestine. The latter envisaged Syria, Lebanon, all Palestine and Transjordan united into one state (see Cohen, *Palestine and Arab Federation*, p. 128; Khalil, *The Arab States and the Arab League*, Vol. 2, p. 10).

5. Palestine, which guards the approaches to the Suez Canal, and has on its territory the outlet for Iraqi oil,[9] is so valuable to the British that it is unlikely that Britain will agree to the temporary transfer of Palestine into the hands of another state, especially the USSR.

6. If the Soviet claim is rejected, the question inevitably arises of the transfer of Palestine to the collective trusteeship of three states – the USSR, the US and Great Britain. Together these three powers could take the necessary decisions, without deferring to Palestinian Arab or Jewish opinion in Palestine as either the British or American government would feel obliged to do if it were acting alone.

7. The conditions of collective trusteeship must not be linked to the Balfour Declaration or to any other promises previously given by Great Britain as the mandatory power, so that the new collective administration can set about solving the Palestine problem justly in accordance with the interests of the population as a whole and the new requirements of political life and general security.[10]

Chairman of the Commission
M. Litvinov

52
Meeting of the National Secretariat of the V League (Tel Aviv, 26 September 1945)

MINUTES: CZA S25/5717

Present: Kaplansky, Pratkin, Tarnopoler, Greenblatt, Manya [Shohat], Zvi Nadav, Tsirulnikov, Dr. Kruck, Nehorai, Kremer, Erem, [Ziesling]

Agenda: 1) Information from Kaplansky;
2) the national convention;
3) Red Army Forest project.

The chairman, Comrade Pratkin, welcomed Kaplansky upon his return from London.

Kaplansky: The report on my meeting at the Soviet embassy in London may have lost some of its freshness, since I have repeated it on various occasions both in London and here at home.

Remez preceded us to London and awaited us. Following our arrival – myself and Ziesling – we applied to the embassy for a formal interview. It was granted immediately. Our meeting was scheduled for 9 August. Owing to the absence of the Soviet ambassador to London, Gusev, who was attending the

9. The terminal of the pipeline from the Mosul oil fields was in Haifa.
10. Copies sent to Stalin, Molotov, Manuil'skii, Lozovskii, Suritz, Litvinov.

Potsdam Conference, we were received by Kukin, the chargé d'affaires at the Soviet embassy in London. Informed circles confirmed that Kukin is a central figure, who has held this post for a total of twelve years. A conversation with him is tantamount to a conversation with the ambassador. Moreover, his expertise exceeds that of the ambassador. Indeed, during the conversation I found that Kukin definitely justified the high evaluation we heard about him from our circles. He is educated, bright and very cultured. In the course of the conversation we discovered that he is knowledgeable about our affairs and about Palestine, and that he takes an interest in everything that occurs here.

I began the formal conversation by surveying briefly the activities of the V League in Palestine, our shipments [to the USSR],[1] our delegations, and our relations with Soviet institutions. I also explained that with the war's end we had to discuss our future plans. We intended to devote our forthcoming national conference to that discussion, and we had invited representatives of the government of the USSR and of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee. We had not yet received a reply. We began to form well-founded suspicions that our invitations had not reached their destinations; therefore, we had taken measures to ensure that our invitations would reach the USSR legations in Cairo and Beirut directly. On the occasion of our visit to London, we expressed the wish to clarify our operative programs with the embassy.

Remez spoke next and added details about the negotiations conducted by the delegation that recently visited Tehran with a representative of the Soviet Red Cross, Dr. Barian. Remez mentioned Barian's concrete proposal that the V League organize support for a Jewish orphanage in Minsk and to the plan for the medical-scientific liaison institution which we intend to establish in Palestine. Finally, he emphasized that we appreciate greatly visits by USSR representatives to Palestine, not only to participate in conferences but also to become acquainted with our endeavours in the country. Remez concluded by expressing the wish that we, too, would be permitted to visit the Soviet Union and make contact with the Jews there.

Kukin, at the outset of his lengthy response, noted that a conversation of the kind we were conducting could assume a formal diplomatic character, or it could be frank, as far as possible, and take a friendly tenor. He himself preferred the latter – to speak as frankly as possible.

To our question – should the V League continue to exist – he assented absolutely and added that we would be making a great mistake if we thought to disband it following the war's conclusion. True, the war had ended, but fascism had not yet been eradicated. It had spread throughout all the countries of Nazi occupation and had made extensive inroads. Many fascist groups had survived in Europe and existed openly, and their influence extended to America, where, too, fascism had made great inroads. Fascism in its bestial form was a carrier of degenerate, zoological antisemitism.

---

1. See Doc. 27, n. 4.

We still share the common, urgent task of waging war on fascism. Subsequently, Kukin said with surprising frankness that he was obliged to admit that even in certain regions of the USSR, which had been under the jackboot of Nazi occupation for a lengthy period, the virulence of Nazism and antisemitism had penetrated and given rise to vile public manifestations.[2] Kukin's admission showed that his earlier remarks had been frank.

Kukin added that the USSR, as a state, was quite capable of curbing manifestations of fascism and antisemitism and uprooting them. By the same token, the USSR valued immensely the public campaign against fascism and antisemitism waged by public bodies and organizations abroad.

Kukin then reiterated that from this point of view he was certainly in favour of the V League's continued existence in Palestine. As for the league's activity, he valued greatly the fostering of cultural relations with the USSR, the diffusion of comprehensive reports about Soviet culture – art, science, music – and of course mutual exchanges of information on life and developments in the Soviet Union and in Palestine. This, he believed, should be the league's major activity.

Regarding relations: Kukin [referred to] the difficulties we had encountered in this matter. But, at the same time, he emphasized that he had received complaints from other countries as well about irregular relations with relevant Soviet institutions. He thinks that it would be preferable for us to be in direct contact with VOKS in Moscow and with the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, without resorting to mediation by USSR legations in Cairo, Ankara or Beirut.

Kukin concluded by remarking: let us hope that relations between us, which in the past were abnormal, will be mended and improved.

From the discussion of the V League, Kukin shifted the conversation to general political matters. It was clear that he was speaking frankly. 'There were difficulties in the past', he said, 'and possibly we can expect many difficulties in the future. The Soviet Union finds itself in a rather delicate situation. True, the Soviet Union has not yet had its final word concerning Palestine, because Palestine is in the British realm of influence; but the USSR may clearly articulate its stand at any juncture. Do not be amazed by this and do not demand binding declarations or unequivocal political statements from the USSR at the present time.'

In response to Kukin's remarks, I said, *inter alia*: 'As emissaries of the V League, we do not insist on political declarations because that is not our task. There is an official Jewish representation in Palestine for the purpose of conducting negotiations with the USSR. When the time comes, it will undoubtedly establish relations with the USSR.' As for Kukin's suggestion that the V League concentrate on furthering cultural ties with the USSR, I noted the flagrant contradiction between Dr. Barian's suggestion and his own. Dr. Barian, for example, had impressed upon our delegation that it was more desirable for

2. For manifestations of antisemitism in the Soviet Union in the wake of the German withdrawal, see Redlich, *War, Holocaust and Stalinism*, pp. 38–40.

the league to continue dealing with concrete, constructive projects; he advised us to avoid lending the league the blatant character of an institution for cultural relations with the USSR, because in that case we could expect many difficulties in our relations with Soviet institutions, which would view us as a kind of Soviet 'agency'.

Here Kukin interrupted me by saying such an approach seemed to him 'incompatible with the current political reality or with the special conditions of our country'. For my part, I said that we were not afraid of being thought a Soviet 'agency' and that we are ready to foster friendly relations with the USSR. I also emphasized that there was a great deal of sympathy for the Soviet Union in the *yishuv*. Within the *yishuv* itself there were large groups of former Russians who were raised on Russian literature and culture, so it should be no surprise if our activity generated extensive support.

As for our relations with Britain: We were grateful to Britain for its positive actions on our behalf. We were well aware that without the mandate we would not have achieved as much as we had in Palestine. But Palestine was not a British colony or a British 'patrimony'; it was international territory for which the mandatory government bore international responsibility.

At this point Kukin again intervened and turned the conversation towards clarification of the current situation in Palestine, showed an interest in the issues to be raised at the [World] Zionist Conference,[3] and asked whether the Labour government[4] had already taken a conclusive decision on its Palestine policy. I replied that the Jewish Agency had not been in contact with the new government (which at that time had still not been formed). As for the Zionist Conference, I said, it had not yet concluded and had not adopted resolutions, though the direction they would take was already clear. The Zionist Conference would decide to demand the proclamation of Palestine as a Jewish state.

Kukin asked: And the Arabs, what will become of them?

In reply, Ziesling quoted the second half of the resolutions adopted by the Elected Assembly[5] concerning political, economic and cultural equality with the Arab community.

I described the developments which had occurred in the Arab community as a result of the Jewish immigration to Palestine, emphasizing that there was no basis for supposing that the situation would be aggravated following the establishment of the Jewish state.

---

3. The World Zionist Conference opened in London on 1 August. It was the first official and representative Zionist gathering after the war and it included moving reports of Holocaust survivors, including survivors and repatriates from the Soviet Union and Soviet-controlled areas. The conference closed on 15 August reaffirming the Zionist demands of establishing a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine and the removal of immigration and land-purchase restrictions.
4. The British general election in July, which resulted in a landslide victory for the Labour Party.
5. In Hebrew, Assefat Hanivharim (see Doc. 16, n. 1)..

Kukin replied: This will certainly not satisfy the Arabs. Have you given no thought to other solutions? Have you not considered, for example, a bi-national solution such as exists in Czechoslovakia?

I told him that such views could be heard in the World Zionist Organization, particularly in the Jewish labour movement. But they were minority views.

Kukin said he had recently chanced to speak with a high-ranking British official, an expert on the Middle East and Palestine. The Englishman admitted that he had once favoured a bi-national solution for Palestine. But of late he had changed his mind, since he was now convinced that any additional Jewish immigration was liable to enrage the Arabs and result in a massacre of Jews...

By way of reply I noted that the British colonial bureaucracy, which opposed the Zionist enterprise in Palestine, constantly raised the spectre of disturbances and an Arab revolt to intimidate us and frighten the government. But I could tell Kukin what I had told my friends in the [British] Labour Party after the riots of 1929:[6] We, Jews from Russia, I said, were well acquainted with the character of pogroms and knew how they were staged by the government. Riots erupted wherever and whenever the government decided on them in advance. It was only because the Arabs knew in advance that there were those in the British Administration in Palestine who wanted disturbances, that they had the audacity to go on the rampage. The Jewish immigration had caused the Arab community to become sated, and I did not believe that anyone would easily incite them to attack the Jews as they did in 1929.

Ziesling followed, stressing that he, too, was very doubtful that the Arabs could be easily induced to riot against the *yishuv*. Today, the *yishuv* constituted an organized force which could defend itself and fight for its life.

Kukin remarked: It is all very well that you are confident of your strength; yet, it would be best if you did not have to use it.

To this I responded: We are well aware that our enterprise in Palestine requires peace. Furthermore, we would welcome the possibility of implementing our project in an atmosphere of understanding and agreement with the Arab community. Whatever the opinion of the majority in the Zionist movement, I shall permit myself to say that the Zionist movement is ready to pay a high price for peace with the Arab community. But the compensation for that peace need not and can not come at the cost of restricting our immigration to Palestine.

Remez tried to get the conversation back to its point of departure and sought a clearer reply from Kukin about dispatching a delegation to the USSR. Remez stressed that we placed great value on maintaining contact with USSR Jewry. For many years the *yishuv* and its Zionist enterprise had had to suffer calumny. The communists in Palestine joined hands with the fascists to spread

6. The 1929 riots in Palestine erupted in August. The immediate cause was a dispute over prayer arrangements near the Wailing Wall, but the underlying causes were the establishment of the Jewish Agency and dissension within the Arab leadership.

libellous claims about our enterprise in Palestine. 'I assume', Remez said, 'that this libel also reached Moscow. Therefore, it is important that we be given the opportunity to maintain ties with the USSR and its Jewish population.'

Kukin replied that he understood that we wished to conduct propaganda among Soviet Jews, but he thought it was still too early to talk about sending a mission to the USSR.

I sensed that Kukin had taken offence from something Remez had said. I deemed it proper, therefore, to go into slightly more detail on the subject Remez broached.

I began my explanation by noting that in 1936 bloody riots[7] had erupted in Palestine. The gangs were led by Hajj Amin al-Husayni and his party. Even then we knew and read that his movement maintained connections with Berlin and Rome. But the Jewish communists thought otherwise. They explained the attacks on Jews as a national revolt by the Palestine Arabs. Consequently, they viewed the rioters sympathetically. About 500 Jews were killed in those attacks, and there were a thousand victims among the Arabs. Obviously, then, the abyss between us and the Jewish communists greatly widened. Hajj Amin al-Husayni fled to Iraq. Later he was involved in the fascist revolt fomented by Rashid Ali.[8] After that uprising was suppressed, Hajj Amin fled to Berlin and placed himself at the service of the Nazis. These facts confirmed our view of the background to the riots of 1929 and 1936 and of the motivating forces that initiated and fomented them. As far as I knew, the communists in Palestine had already abandoned their previous position. As a result, they had also re-joined the Histadrut Federation of Labour.[9] This was also apparently what lay behind the split that occurred in the ranks of the communists in Palestine. When I concluded my explanation, Kukin remarked: 'I have heard about developments [in Palestine] on many occasions, but from all that I heard I was unable to form a correct and comprehensive conception. I must admit that this is the first time I have heard – from Mr. Kaplansky – a substantive explanation.'

The conversation went on for about two and a half hours, and at its end Kukin reiterated that Soviet circles did not doubt that the Jews of Palestine were a progressive element.

We expressed our wish that he visit Palestine. He replied that he had many friends there and hoped to pay such a visit.

Conclusion

Permit me to sum up. Even though I presented the report both in London and here – to several members of the Secretariat who came to see me in Haifa – it is nevertheless not improbable that I left out a few details. It is also possible that my memory betrayed me and that I forgot some things. In any

7. See Doc. 31, n. 3.
8. See Doc. 27, n. 2.
9. In 1943, the Palestine Communist Party split into an Arab and a Jewish faction. The Jewish faction joined the Histadrut in 1944.

event, my remarks have been recorded in the minutes here, and when Remez and Ziesling return they will read them and will have the opportunity to amend what I missed.

The conversation with Kukin was very friendly. The very fact that in a period of political tension the chargé d'affaires of the embassy – who in the ambassador's absence is the acting ambassador – found it sufficiently important to devote two and a half hours to our meeting is evidence that Soviet circles take a serious attitude towards the league and attach importance to the connection with us.

As for the concrete matters we raised: The impression is that the Soviet Union is now displaying great caution towards political developments in the Middle East in general and in Palestine in particular. By the same token, they are taking care not to involve the Soviet legations in the Middle East in relations or direct ties with the league. My impression is that they wish to concentrate connections with foreign organizations exclusively through VOKS. If Kukin's approach differs from Barian's, that is undoubtedly due to the time that had elapsed. He did not so much reject Barian's proposal as supplement it. By referring us to VOKS they are saying that they prefer to maintain connections with us through semi-official institutions. From our conversation I also understood why there has been no response to our invitation to Soviet representatives to attend our national conference: the Soviet institutions which we invited do not want to turn us down, but neither are they in a position to accept. In any event, we should not hold out the hope that official Soviet representatives will attend our meeting. Perhaps representatives of VOKS will be able to participate.

Remez' assessment of the conversation was pessimistic. In his view, Kukin's insistence that the Soviet Union has not yet made known its stand on Palestine and will have its say at the appropriate time should be taken as a retraction of the Soviet delegation's declaration at the London Conference [of the WFTU]. Afterwards I heard from Ziesling that Remez had changed his opinion and now positively evaluates the conversation, which was very frank.

It seems to me that the talk with the British expert to which Kukin alluded, whether it was factual or merely allegorical, in any event indicates that Britain and the USSR are exchanging information, and the British representatives are making frequent use of the threat of massacre which hangs over the *yishuv*. By alluding to his conversation with the British official, Kukin apparently wanted to elicit our opinion.

To conclude, I want to reiterate again that I may have omitted any number of mundane details. For example, I asked why it is so difficult to get a reply from Moscow. Likewise, when I remarked that the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee did not accept our invitation, I conjectured that perhaps the death of Shakhno Epshtein had disrupted the committee's work.[10] To this Kukin

10. Shakhno Epshtein was secretary of the Anti-Fascist Committee and editor of its newspaper *Eynikeyt*.

responded that he knew nothing of Epshtein's death. (Shakhno Epshtein died at the beginning of July, and our talk took place early in August).

Kukin took an interest in our party affiliation. Our impression is that he knows about us and about our public status. We later discovered that he had visited an agricultural training farm in the company of Locker[11] and had received first-hand information about Palestine.

Kruck thanked Kaplansky for the report on behalf of all the members of the National Secretariat and noted that of all the delegations that have represented the league, the latest was the most outstanding.

53
I.V. Samylovskii and V. Maliarov to V.G. Dekanozov

COPY: AVP RF, F.012, OP.6, P.81, D.177, LL.1–6.
[Moscow] 20 October 1945
Secret

MEMORANDUM ON OUR PROPERTY IN PALESTINE
(Supplement to the Memorandum of 11 October 1945 on this Question)[1]

Our property in Palestine consists of 35 plots of land (see appendix) totalling up to 2 km², together with the buildings erected on them (compounds, hotels, hospitals, churches etc.). According to data of Narkomindel of the USSR, the value of these plots with the buildings erected on them is reckoned to be £1 million sterling. In legal terms, the whole of this property falls into four

Doc. 52

11. Reference presumably to one of the agricultural training farms maintained by the Zionists in Britain.

Doc. 53

1. In response to the instructions of Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs V. Dekanozov, V. Maliarov, an official of the Near East Department, submitted a memorandum on 11 October 1945, which has been reproduced below *in toto*. Having read Maliarov's memorandum, Dekanozov returned it with the following instruction: 'Preserve and [add] memorandum on property. V.D. 15 October.'

Memorandum on Correspondence with the British regarding our Property in Palestine
COPY: AVP RF, F.012, OP.6, P.81, D.177, LL.7–8.
Moscow, 11 October 1945
On 18 May 1923, the Soviet government's official agent in Britain, Krasin, warned the British government that the Soviet Union had claims to property in Palestine that had belonged to the Russian tsarist government, the former Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and the Russian Palestine Society. Krasin's note remained unanswered.

On 17 July 1924, the Soviet chargé d'affaires in Britain, Rakovskii, reasserted that the above-mentioned property belonged to the government of the USSR and that no one had the right to dispose of it without the Soviet government's consent and approval.(i)

On 24 October 1924, the British Foreign Office informed Rakovskii in a note that if the Soviet government wanted to establish its right to any property in Palestine, the ownership of which

groups: (1) property which belonged to the Russian government; (2) property which belonged to the former Ecclesiastical Mission; (3) property which belonged to the former Russian Orthodox Palestine Society; (4) property which was spuriously registered in the names of private persons, but which was acquired by the Ecclesiastical Mission or the Palestine Society. In those days, according to Ottoman law, foreign societies, firms or private persons could not own real estate. The right to own real estate was limited to Turkish subjects, although an exception was made for members of the Russian imperial family. This explains why the title-deeds of many plots of land and other property in Palestine are drawn up in the name of Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich, who was president of the Palestine Society.

Legally, this should all be recognized as Soviet state property by virtue of the decree on the nationalization of the property of the former imperial family. In dealing with this matter, we can cite as a precedent the decision of the Lebanese court and the subsequent decree of the president of the Republic of Lebanon transferring to us the property of the Palestine Society in the Ashrafiyeh quarter of Beirut, which was registered in the name of the former Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich.

(cont.) was in dispute, then it had to prove its right of possession in Palestinian courts. At the time, the Soviet government rejected the judicial route.(ii)

On 4 December 1938, Comrade Potemkin asked Comrade Maiskii to express his views on how to proceed on the issue of the property in Palestine. On 26 December 1938, Comrade Maiskii wrote in reply to Comrade Potemkin that 'owing to events with which you are familiar,(iii) the British are now extremely nervous about Palestine, and they will assess our every step concerning properties in Palestine with redoubled suspicion'.

On 19 February 1939, in a letter to Comrade Maiskii, Comrade Potemkin proposed approaching the British with a request to permit our consul-general in Istanbul, Georgievskii, into Palestine in order to familiarize himself with the economic and legal status of the property.(iv)

On 6 March 1945, Comrade Gusev delivered a note to Deputy Foreign Secretary Cadogan requesting the soonest possible transfer of our property in Palestine.

On 9 April 1945, in a conversation with Gusev, Cadogan asserted that the issue of Russian property in Palestine required thorough study and it was, therefore, being reviewed by the appropriate departments.(v)

On 16 September 1945, a telegram signed by Comrade Vyshinskii was sent to Comrade Gusev for delivery to the British Foreign Office. In this note reference was made to the note of 6 March of this year and the embassy asked the Foreign Office to set a date on which the representatives of the interested Soviet organizations could depart for this location and begin formal procedures for receiving their property. On 17 September of this year, the note was delivered to the British Foreign Office.

In a reply of 1 October 1945, the British Foreign Office explained that the issue of Russian property in Palestine had been handed over to the Palestine government for consideration and that a response to the Soviet embassy's note of 6 March 1945 and that of 17 September 1945 would be given, possibly, in the near future.(vi)

Thus, Italian ambassador Quaroni's statement about the rejection by the British court of Soviet government claims to tsarist property in Palestine, which he had made in a conversation with Comrade Grishin on 29 September, had no basis in reality.(vii)

(i) The Soviet note also asked that the necessary facilities be granted to a USSR representative in order to proceed at once to Palestine and take measures there 'to safeguard the property'. PRO FO 371/10112.

(ii) The British Foreign Office asked Khristian Rakovskii to inform it precisely what steps the Soviet representative would take in Palestine [cf. note (i)] and whether he would have any official

In 1914, after the outbreak of war between Turkey and Russia, the Turks occupied the compounds of the Palestine Society and the hospital and other buildings of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission. In 1917, when British troops occupied Palestine, all these very important buildings were seized by units of the British army. On 24 July 1922, Great Britain was given the mandate for Palestine. According to article 13 of this mandate, Britain was made responsible for all the 'holy' places and religious buildings in Palestine. All the property of the former Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and also of the former Palestine Society falls under the heading of 'religious sites' since, according to article 1 of the Statute of the Russian Orthodox Palestine Society, the duties of the society were to assist Orthodox pilgrims in their pilgrimage to the 'holy' places of the East, and to collect scholarly information about 'holy' places of the East. It follows that the British government is responsible for the state of our property in Palestine.

(cont.) status during his visit (PRO CO 733/195). The Soviet reply followed on 9 March 1926 in the form of a note signed by the Soviet chargé d'affairs ad interim in Great Britain, Ivan Maiskii. It stated that the duty of 'the Soviet representative in Palestine' would be 'to find out the nature and situation of the property to obtain the facts regarding the misuse of this property...[and] to get in touch with the state and juridical institutions for the purpose of protecting this property against further plunder' (PRO CO 733/195). On 14 October 1926 the British Foreign Office informed Soviet chargé d'affaires in Great Britain L. Krasin that 'His Majesty's Government, after careful consideration, are unable to agree to the despatch of a representative of the Soviet government to Palestine' (PRO CO 733/195). For Krasin's reply dated 18 November 1926, see *Dokumenty vneshnei politiki SSSR*, v. 9 (1964), p. 546.
After receipt of Krasin's reply, the British Foreign Office decided to leave the note unanswered (PRO FO 371/232249).

(iii) The reference is to the Arab revolt of 1936–39 against Jewish immigration and British rule in Palestine.

(iv) On 29 March 1939 USSR Ambassador in Great Britain Maiskii asked the Foreign Office to grant a two-month visa for entry to Palestine for K.A. Georgievskii 'in order that he may acquaint himself with the position of the various properties which belonged to the former Imperial Government of Russia, as well as that which was in possession of various Russian religious and other societies'. After discussion of the subject between the high commissioner for Palestine and the colonial and foreign secretaries, Lord Halifax informed Colonial Secretary MacDonald on 26 December 1939, 'that it is unlikely that the Soviet government will make any further representations on the subject at the present time and concurs with Mr. Secretary MacDonald's proposal to defer further consideration of this subject' (PRO FO 371/23249).

(v) An internal Soviet memorandum of 12 May 1945 stated: 'As is apparent from negotiations between [our] ambassador in London, Gusev, and Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Cadogan, the British are not inclined to accede to our claims for return of our property in Palestine. It is very likely that the British might link the issue of return of this property with the solution of British claims to [their] property in the Baltic countries and to the Lena gold fields concession [in Siberia]. Therefore, it follows that the question of the return of the Palestinian property to us will inevitably be long and drawn-out, and the option of a British attempt to pass this property to a third party cannot be excluded'. Samylovskii and Erofeev to Kavtaradze (AVP RF f.0118, op.8, p.4, d.2, l.7).

(vi) During a visit to Palestine, 3–15 October 1945, Soviet Minister in Egypt Aleksei Shchiborin met the district commissioner of Jerusalem and asked him to supply information on the Russian property about which Minister Novikov had inquired during his visit to Palestine in August 1944 (PRO FO 371/5259).

(vii) Pietro Quaroni, former Italian Minister to Afghanistan, from April 1944 accredited to Moscow as Italian representative and later ambassador.

In implementing the mandate, the British high commissioner for Palestine issued a number of orders dealing with the property of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and of the Palestine Society. These orders provided for the appointment of special administrators with very broad powers, including the right to spend the income from our properties. It should also be noted that the high commissioner's orders say nothing about property belonging to the former Russian government (such as the Russian consul-general's house in Jerusalem). The legal status of that property is wholly unclear.

According to data in the files, the British treat our property as if it were their own. Most of the inhabitable buildings are either occupied by British institutions or by British troops, or are leased. White émigré organizations also have use of our property. For example, the British have handed over the very considerable property of the former Russian Ecclesiastical Mission to the 'religious mission' headed by Archimandrite Antonii Senkevich, who is a lackey of the British. The head of the self-styled 'Russian Palestine Society', Antipov, who was Russian consul in Persia, is also there. Currently, he is a British official.

Director of the Near East Department
of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the USSR
I. Samylovskii
Assessor of the Near-East Department
V. Maliarov

Appendix: List of Russian Properties in Palestine

LIST OF RUSSIAN PROPERTIES IN PALESTINE[2]

1. Jerusalem (within the city walls) – a plot of land, Dabbagha, with hostel (Aleksandrovskii) and church
2. Jerusalem (within the city walls) – a plot of land in Bab Hutta
3. Jerusalem (outside the city walls) – old Russian buildings (Muskubiyya al-Qadima). The area includes: a) the consulate building; b) cathedral and church; c) three compounds – Elizavetskii, Mariinskii and Nikolaevskii; d) hospital; e) hospital
4. Jerusalem (outside the city walls) – plot of land, Khumsi or Moris-al-Asali with house for consular officials
5. Jerusalem (outside the city walls) – Sergievskii compound or Muskubiyya al-Jadida
6. Jerusalem (outside the city walls) – Veniaminovskii compound

2. The list is identical to that enclosed with the Soviet note to the Foreign Office delivered on 6 March 1945 (see PRO FO 371/45390).

7. Jerusalem (outside the city walls) – plot of land with two houses on the street Sheikh-Ukasha
8. Jerusalem (outside the city walls near the Damascus Gate) – plot of land, Egnemi or Hakurat a-Barajiyya
9. Jerusalem (outside the city walls near the Mamilla pond) – two plots of land under the name of 'Mamilla'
10. Village of A-Tur on the top of the Mount of Olives – church and three hospices, plots of land
11. On the Mount of Olives – plot of land, Karm al-Harab with tombs of prophets
12. On the Mount of Olives – plot of land, Karm al-Qazal.
13. On the Mount of Olives – (place called Viri-Galilei) – plot of land, Ars al-Habail
14. On the slopes of the Mount of Olives, near Gethsemane – plot of land, with chapel with two buildings (hospices) and reservoir
15. Village of Silwan – plot of land with cave and adjacent second plot
16. Village of Silwan – plot of land known as Hakurat al-Byadir
17. Kedron Valley 'Wadis-Sau-Ahireh' – plot of land with the caves Rumaniyya and Dayresiniyya
18. Village of Ein-Karem – plot of land with church, two hospices and forty small houses
19. Near village of Ein-Karem at the place called Qarya Djevari – a plot of land
20. Bethlehem – plot of land known as El-Atr
21. Village of Beit Jalla near Bethlehem – plot of land, consisting of two parts: on them a boarding house for women, a school and a dispensary
22. Near the village of Beit Jalla – plot of land known as Ras-On on the hill of the same name
23. Village of Anata – plot of land known as Beit al-Haraba
24. Jaffa (outside the town, in the suburb of Sabil al-Shifa) – plot of land; on it a garden with church and hospice for pilgrims
25. Jaffa (outside the town in the suburb of Sabil al-Shifa) – narrow strip of land opposite a garden, separated from it by the road called Sikkat al-Sabil
26. Near the town of Hebron – plot of land known as Sibta with hospice for pilgrims
27. Near the town of Hebron – two plots of land known as Balyad or Khirbet un-Pasara and Khalyat al-Butma
28. Jericho – plot of land, on it a garden known as Hakurat al-Burj with hospice for pilgrims
29. Jericho – plot of land with garden known as al-Birka with two hospices for pilgrims
30. Haifa (on the seashore) – a plot of land
31. Nazareth – plot of land known as Hakurat al-Tin with hospice for pilgrims
32. Nazareth – plot of land known as 'small plot'
33. Nazareth – plot of land in the al-Ayn ward

34. Tiberias (on the shore of the lake) – plot of land, on it hospice for pilgrims
35. Village of Ramalla – plot of land under the name of Ayn al-Mazarib

54
Meeting of the Commission for Preparation of Peace Agreements and Postwar Settlement

MINUTES: AVP RF, F.05, P.173, OP.3, D.5, L.7
[Moscow] 15 November 1945
Top Secret

Present: Comrades Litvinov, Lozovskii, Surits, Shtein (members of the commission); Comrade Iudin (secretary of the commission).

AGENDA

Chairman's report on the activities of the commission.
Comrade Litvinov gave the following report:
[...]

XXVIII. *The Jewish Question*: The late Epshtein[1] was commissioned to report on this matter, but unfortunately he died before he could do so. It is not yet an international issue, apart from the Palestine question, on which a memorandum has been sent.[2]

The chairman of the commission M.M. Litvinov, concluded his report by saying that 'the commission has nothing more to do, and this seems to be a wholly appropriate moment to propose to the government that it be disbanded, since it has carried out the tasks which it was given to perform, within the limits imposed upon it.'
Note: The minutes were sent to V.M. Molotov.

1. Shakhno Epshtein, see Doc. 52, n. 10.
2. Reference is apparently to Doc. 51.

55
'P.'[1] to M. Shertok (Jerusalem)

COPY: CZA S25/486
Cairo, 1 January 1946
Confidential

I had yesterday a long conversation with the correspondent of TASS Ianchenko. His view could be summarized as in the following way:

'I see that your people are continuing the rioting.[2] It seems to me that this tactic will not pay. It gives the English the pretext and opportunity to remain in these places and instead of getting rid of them you will help them to get stronger. I know that these are the extremists.

These tactics to blow up government offices as a demonstration is a silly way of fighting. The railroad business was much cleverer because it had a definite purpose and showed that hindrances can be made in future military operations.

In the last conference in Moscow[3] the talks about Iran failed because Molotov said to Bevin that Russia is ready to evacuate Iran if England will evacuate Egypt and Palestine. We have much more rights on Iran than England on Egypt and Palestine. Anyway Teheran is much nearer to our borders than Cairo and Jerusalem to London. The day is near when Russia will have her say in the Middle Eastern affairs and we must be therefore prepared to know all what is going on in these places.

My colleague Korostovtsev returned just from Palestine. He did not contact neither your nor Arab authorities and tried to see Palestine with his own eyes. He visited your colonies and settlements without that anyone knew who he was. He is very impressed with all what he saw and especially with the collective settlements.[4]

We understand very well that the Arab feudalism does not want to accept this form of life and that the British are fighting it in order not to allow social reforms to spread in the Middle East where feudalism is their base and their only hope. The more had Soviet Russia to be interested in Jewish Palestine.

---

1. Short for Palcor (Palestine Correspondents), the Jewish Agency news service. The author was apparently Yolande Harmer, an agent recruited by Sasson. See Gelber, *Shorshei hahavatselet*, pp. 645–7. The original document was written in flawed English. It has been reproduced here without editorial intervention.
2. Reference is to activities of the Jewish resistance movement – a joint venture of underground bodies – the Hagana, the Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Stern Group (Lehi), which began coordinated sabotage activities in October 1945. The most notable were the raid on Atlit detention camp and the release of illegal immigrants there on 10 October 1945, and blowing up the Palestine railway system in a number of locations on the night of 31 October–1 November 1946.
3. The Moscow meeting of the American, British and Soviet foreign ministers which took place from 16 to 27 December 1945. The meeting discussed and concluded arrangements on most of the postwar issues in Europe and the Far East but failed to reach an agreement on Iran, where the Soviet troop withdrawal was being delayed.
4. See Doc. 57.

And Moscow actually is. Our Minister in Cairo Sh[chi]borin is already one month in Moscow and I am sure that all these questions are discussed there. He specially went to Palestine before going to Moscow to see the things himself.

Please give us therefore the full picture of Arab social life, description of parties, newspapers and history of ruling families stressing the primitive form of life, the rule of few families, the feudal relationship in the villages, their inner struggles, etc.

We know very well that due to the Jewish immigration the standard of Arab life in Palestine is higher than in the whole of the Middle East and that in the same time the relationship with the Jews better than in other countries.

The hatred to Jews in the Orient is a part of feudal policy supported by Britain in order to avert attention of the population from more important issues. The 2nd of November was a typical act of this policy in the same way as it was happening in Czarist Russia.[5]

So please give us all the needed material to make the facts vivid and the picture more complete.

You ask me in what way can Soviet Russia help the Jewish Palestine. You also stressed that although you understand that we are now against the [Arab] League, you don't imagine that Russia in her world policy will not look for a way to win the hearts of the Arab population. So you asked where will be then the Jews. You also explained me that Palestine is far from the Russian border and that there is a danger that approaching you today Russia will have to drop you tomorrow with the changing political stage and with the permanent international bargaining.

I understand these thoughts and feelings very well. I must frankly say that I have no answer to all that. And I would like to discuss all these questions with Shchiborin when he will come back from Moscow. He will probably bring with him more definite views of Moscow.

I personally also think that Russia must find a way of understanding with the Arabs, but knowing their backwardness and your progressiveness all our sympathy will be with your experiment and I suppose that we are well equipped to look for a solution to the Arab–Jewish question.

Speaking about boycott.[6] According to our information the English are definitely opposed to the boycott. It came as a great surprise to them and there were talks between them to dismiss Azzam.[7] The reason of their opposition is probably that they are afraid that a boycott system is a dangerous idea which can tomorrow be used against the British goods as well.

I personally don't believe that it can be realized in practice.

---

5. On the occasion of the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration on 2 November, Arab rioters took to the streets of Cairo and Alexandria, looting and beating Jews.
6. In a meeting that took place in Cairo in December, five Arab countries, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Lebanon imposed an economic boycott on the products of the Jewish community in Palestine.
7. Abd al-Rahman Azzam, secretary-general of the Arab League.

You know probably that a couple of days ago Soviet Moslem pilgrims passed Cairo on their way from Mecca.[8] They told me that King Ibn Saud delivered a long speech to the pilgrims asking them to boycott the Jews in all the countries where they live. Our pilgrims were also received by Ibn Saud and he asked them about the life in Russia.

I brought to them an American correspondent and the head of the pilgrims told him all the story, adding that an appeal to Soviet Moslems to fight the Jews is ridiculous, and that what they saw showed them that Soviet Moslems are four hundred years in advance of the Arabs in the Middle East and that life in Soviet Asia is incomparable with the life here. The Sheikh asked only the correspondent not to stress it out too much in order not to spoil the relationship between the Soviet Moslems and the Arab countries. One of the pilgrims was a professor of the University of Kazan, a doctor (Tatar) whose job was to look after the health of the pilgrims. But when it was known that a Soviet doctor arrived, thousands of Arabs in Saudia came to see him asking for medical help.

We will have probably an increase of pilgrims in the year 1946. There will be also thousands of pilgrims in Easter to Palestine. Soviet government applied already for their visas. You say that people will think that it is an avant-guard of the Red Army. That is true. Everything is used to throw suspicion on us.

Anyway, I think that we must do everything to help you and when you will have the Jewish state don't forget that I am one who deserves a medal for the help in establishing this state.

P.

56
D.S. Solod to I.V. Samylovskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.2, D.6, LL.6–10
Beirut, 3 January 1946
Secret

To the head of the Near East Department of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, Comrade I.V. Samylovskii,

I enclose translations of some material on the Palestine question which I think will be of interest to the department.

It is well known that the present situation in Palestine with regard to Jewish immigration was determined by the British White Paper of 1939, according to

8. In 1945, 17 Soviet Muslims had been allowed to make the *hajj* – the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina on the occasion of *'Id al-Adha*. (The previous year, the first time the *hajj* had been permitted in 20 years, just 6 had gone.) The 1945 delegation – the last one to go until 1953 – was headed by the chairman of the Spiritual Directorate of the Muslims of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, the chairman of the Central Spiritual Directorate of the Muslims of Inner Russia, and the deputy chairman of the Spiritual Directorate of the Muslims of Transcaucasia.

which 75,000[1] Jewish immigrants were to be allowed in. This was to bring an end to the creation of a Jewish national home in Palestine, as proclaimed in the well-known Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917.

Since then, especially in connection with World War II, the Palestine question does not seem to have been of any urgent or compelling interest.

The origin of the present period of aggravation can be found in the statements of the American Republican, and later Democratic, parties during the presidential campaign of 1944.[2]

The American parties' statements aroused some anxiety in Arab countries, which explains why the King of Saudi Arabia, Ibn Saud, and the president of the Syrian Republic, Shukri al-Quwwatli, both sent letters to President Roosevelt in March after their conversation with him in Cairo on his way back from the Yalta conference.[3] These letters are enclosed.[4]

A second period of polemics about Palestine arose following President Truman's statement that the Palestine question had been discussed by the Americans and the British at the Potsdam conference in August 1945.[5] In the polemics of this period, we should note the comment of the secretary of the Arab League, Abd al-Rahman Azzam Bey, that the Arabs cannot understand why the Russians are not taking part in resolving the Palestine question, if it is an international issue (see appendix of 19 August).

The new surge of activity surrounding the Palestine question, which is still going on, flared up in the middle of September when Truman's proposal to allow the immigration to Palestine of 100,000 Jews from Western Europe became known.[6]

---

1. The original erroneously has 175,000.
2. Both parties included statements in their presidential election platforms which endorsed the main Zionist demands.
3. Roosevelt, in fact, met only King Ibn Saud at the Great Bitter Lake, mid-way down the Suez Canal on board the American destroyer *Murphy*. Letters of protest regarding Zionism in Palestine were sent by heads of all seven Arab states: Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Transjordan, Syria, Yemen, Lebanon and Egypt (*FRUS*, 1945, Vol. VIII, pp. 691–3).
4. See note 10 below.
5. The *New York Times* of 17 August 1945 reported: 'The president was asked about this government's position on the Palestine question during his press conference. He has been asked whether the question of a Jewish national state had been mentioned during the Big Three's conversations. He said that the matter had been discussed with former Prime Minister Churchill and Prime Minister Attlee but not with Premier Stalin since, as the president put it, there was nothing that the Generalissimo could do about it anyway. Later in the press conference he was asked directly: 'What was the American position on Palestine?' President Truman's reply follows in substance: The Americans' view on Palestine is that we want to let as many of the Jews into Palestine as it is possible to let into the country and still maintain civil peace. That matter will have to be worked out with the British and the Arabs for a Jewish state. But there is no idea in the mind of the president or his advisors of sending a strong military force of, say 500,000, soldiers overseas to keep the peace in Palestine.
6. On 13 September it was made known that President Truman had written a personal letter to Prime Minister Attlee requesting that Britain permit the immediate immigration to Palestine of 100,000 Jewish DPs (see *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. VIII, p. 742).

All the activity of this period, which was accompanied by disorder and provocation in Palestine,[7] led to the well-known statement on 13 November by British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin in the House of Commons;[8] the establishment of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry; the formation of the Supreme Arab Palestinian Committee, which united all the main Arab parties in Palestine, that is, something like the Peel Commission of 1937 and the Arab Higher Committee of that time; and the convocation of the Arab League council, which declared a boycott of Zionist industrial products.[9]

All this material deserves detailed analysis, but I believe that you have already made a study of that kind, so I will confine myself to the following brief remarks:

1. The urgency and seriousness of the Palestine question arose and exists because it is for many reasons the key issue in Anglo-American differences on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean.

The point is that with a view to the anticipated development of the oil industry in Saudi Arabia, it is very important for the Americans to secure their position on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean and to extend the Arabian oil pipeline there so that it should not end on territory controlled by the British.

The most appropriate places for this are the Egyptian or Palestinian coasts, which are the nearest both to Saudi Arabia and to the main Mediterranean transport route. But Egypt is bound by a treaty with Great Britain, which jealously guards Egypt, so that a direct or even an indirect penetration of the US into Egypt cannot be carried out without serious objections from, and possibly even clashes with, Britain.

For Britain, the most vulnerable part of this area is Palestine. Although it is a mandated British territory, the unsettled question of creating a Jewish home could enable the Americans to find a solution which would not be a direct contravention of British privileges in Palestine, but would at the same time give the Americans, through the Jewish 'home' or 'state', a chance to displace the British economically and politically.

Although neither side has made these positions explicit, in practice they make Palestine the centre of Anglo-American differences in the Middle East.

The Americans can certainly lay a pipeline to Lebanon, and they have already made sure of this by concluding an agreement on the construction of oil refineries; but this would lengthen the pipeline and take it further from the main Mediterranean transport route.

---

7. Reference is to the combined resistance activities of Jewish underground forces in Palestine (see Doc. 55, n. 2).
8. Reference is to Bevin's declaration of policy on Palestine and the formation of the joint Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry. For background to this committee, see *Political Documents of the Jewish Agency*, Vol. I, Editorial Note, pp. 201–2.
9. See Doc. 55, n. 6.

2. The formation of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry may mean that with these ends in view the Americans are trying to reach a solution which would give the Jewish part of Palestine autonomous or independent status. The British are unlikely to raise much objection to this American plan. True, the statement in the House of Lords by former High Commissioner to Palestine Lord Samuel, in which he opposes the partition of Palestine, is to be found at the end of the appendices. However, in their effort to strengthen Iraq and to create a counterweight to Egypt and Saudi Arabia, the British might agree to such a partition of Palestine. They would fortify Iraq at the expense of Palestine and Transjordan, and in the process secure their own position in the Middle East.

3. The Arab League Council's announcement of a boycott of Zionist industry and its obsequious reply to Bevin's statement is a rather good manoeuvre by the British, which could well lead to the partition of Palestine. This fascist device of inflaming racial hatred will distract the Arabs' attention from the real factors hindering a solution to the Palestine question, and will create a favourable argument for the need to preserve the existing Jewish home against the visible threat to it by the surrounding Arab countries.

Moreover, the boycott of Zionist industry, which in present circumstances in Palestine cannot be distinguished from Jewish industry, creates favourable conditions for the British to get a large quantity of orders for their own goods from Arab countries. This will restore their economic position in these countries, since the war had led to the development of Palestinian consumer goods production to the point at which it was beginning to compete seriously with British industry. True, nobody here is paying serious attention to the announcement of the boycott, for Arab merchants are laying in large stocks of Palestinian goods. When the council's decision on the boycott comes into force they can pass off these Palestinian goods as leftovers in the warehouses, and can do quite well out of this. Even so, the boycott is bound to increase orders to British and American firms.

4. No matter how the Palestine issue is resolved, whether the Americans manage to displace the British or not, I believe that in either case a solution reached without our participation will not be to our advantage. Therefore, in a wholly timely and justified manner we can and ought to demand to participate in the solution of this question, since the Jews in Europe are to be found in the Soviet as well as the Anglo-American occupation zone. Moreover, Palestine itself is situated not only on the route of British imperial communications, but also on the sea routes to various ports in our own country.

Solod

Appendix: 54 pages.[10]

10. The following note is appended on the front page: 'To Maksimov, pay attention to point 4 of the letter. Insert into our Palestine file, which should be updated, Samylovskii, 24.1.'

57
'P.' to D. Ben-Gurion (Jerusalem)

COPY: CZA S25/486
[Cairo] 1 February 1946

A CONVERSATION WITH M. KOROSTOVTSEV FROM TASS[1]

'I visited recently Palestine and travelled through some of the collective settlements. I spent some time in Givat Brenner. What struck me mainly in the kibbutzim is the lack of personal economic interest. That means there is no private property, no wages that the members could spend as they like, and no differentiation between various professions. It looks to me as a permanent self-sacrifice. Of course a human being has sometimes to join the army and has to sacrifice years of his life for his country, but this is a temporary measure. But this one is an economy built on a basis of permanent sacrifice. I must confess I do not believe in economy of such a kind. It can last ten to fifteen years, maybe a generation, but economy cannot be built on pure idealism. Let us compare kibbutz with a kolkhoz. There everyone has his house property, his garden, his poultry. And the common work on the land is paid in money which he can dispose of as he likes. The sovkhoz is a [--] where the labourer gets wages which he can economize and save for the time he will leave this place. And of course the engineer of such a factory is paid much higher than a man who digs potatoes. That is the main stimulus to obtain more knowledge and more skill. What stimulus would have a young student to learn and to finish the university if ultimately he would be paid on the same level as an unskilled labourer. Of course I know that people in the kibbutz in no way consider it as a sacrifice, that their work is paid in food, clothes, housing, and in education of their children. I know also that the members of the kibbutz are less affected by a crisis or unemployment and that this movement is a result of a new spirit in Jewry and a new understanding of social life. I know all that and still I cannot think about this experiment otherwise as about an idealistic effort which will change with the growth of the population or with the spreading of the land workers.

But there is no doubt that it is a highly progressive socialistic experiment and that neither the British nor the Arab League can accept it. All British relationship with the East is based on support of the big landlords, and the Arab League is an instrument of this system. Anti-Zionism is in many ways result of the fear of this new system of economy and life.'

P.

1. See Doc. 55, n. 1.

58
Major-General Basilov to I.V. Samylovskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.9, P.5, D.5, L.1
Moscow, 27 April 1946
Secret

To the Director of the Near East Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Comrade I.V. Samylovskii,

In the course of 1945 our representative in Egypt, Major Semin, recorded that there were in Palestine 206 Soviet citizens, qualified to be repatriated to the USSR, but the question of their repatriation has dragged on and has to be resolved through diplomatic channels.[1]

According to available information, these Soviet citizens, who have declared that they wish to return home are at present being subjected to every sort of insult and persecution by reactionary Palestinian organizations.[2] Please let us know how far this question has been sorted out, since in January 1946 our representative in Egypt was recalled with the agreement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and further work on locating and repatriating Soviet citizens has been entrusted by the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Minister in Egypt, Comrade Shchiborin.

Assistant Plenipotentiary of the Council of Ministers
of the USSR on Matters of Repatriation[3]
Major-General Basilov

Appendix: List of Soviet citizens registered in Palestine, 7 pp., sent only to addressee.[4]

1. Another officer, Lt.-Col. Karasov, head of the repatriation committee's Middle East mission, arrived in Palestine and registered approximately 130 civilians said to be Soviet citizens. Karasov applied to the British military authorities to send these people to the USSR; however, the British recommended approaching UNRRA (see Minister Resident in the Middle East to the Foreign Office, 18 July 1945, PRO FO 371/51226). Commenting on this, British Minister in Moscow Frank Roberts wrote: 'Palestine is no exception to general Soviet policy of jealous refusal to give up anyone whom they regard as a Soviet citizen' (Roberts to the Foreign Office, 1 August 1945, PRO FO 371/51226). On 2 July 1945, Sultanov, of the Soviet legation in Cairo, met a representative of the British embassy and urgently requested that all Soviet citizens in Palestine be gathered in one camp and then supplied transport facilities for their transfer to Italy or Tehran. The British diplomat replied that the embassy was not authorized to give orders to the high commissioner of Palestine, but he could recommend such an action (see AVP RF, f.0118, op.8, p.4, d.8, l.3).
2. On 15 July 1945, *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* published a TASS report from Cairo entitled 'Persecution of Soviet Citizens in Palestine' which claimed that Soviet citizens who had requested to return to the USSR were being intimidated: fired from their jobs, evicted from their apartments and even assaulted in public.
3. The Chief Directorate for Repatriation was established in October 1944. It was manned by officials of Soviet counter-intelligence (SMERSH) and the secret police (NKVD). Its purpose was to return prisoners of war and civilians taken for forced labour during World War II to Germany and other countries under Nazi rule. More than 5 million people were brought back to the USSR in this repatriation effort.
4. Deputy Director of the Middle East Department Maksimov wrote by hand in the margin of the document, 'Comrade Maliarov, clarify this question'. On 2 April 1947, First Secretary of the Middle East Department Maliarov submitted a memorandum. according to which, in response to the Soviet demand for the return of 206 Soviet citizens from Palestine in 1946, the British

59
Memorandum by M.A. Maksimov

COPY: AVP RF, F.06, OP.8, P.42, D.694, LL.1–4
Moscow, 15 May 1946
Secret

THE PALESTINE QUESTION

On 13 April 1946 the Anglo-American Committee [of Enquiry] which had been set up by Britain and the US to study the question of Palestine completed its work and published its report.[1]

The committee made the following recommendations to the British and United States governments:

1. To transfer 100,000 Jews to Palestine in 1946, if possible. This immigration should take place as quickly as circumstances allow.
2. Neither a Jewish nor an Arab state should be created in Palestine, since this would lead to civil war. Ultimately Palestine must become a state which would guarantee equal rights to Christians, Jews and Arabs.
3. The existing British mandate should continue as the basis of government in Palestine until the United Nations reaches agreement on a UN trusteeship.
4. The existing regulations on the leasing and sale of land in Palestine must be replaced by others, based on a policy of free sale and leasing of land to all persons, irrespective of their race or religion.
5. There should be a declaration of principle, that the economic, cultural and political development of the Arabs in Palestine should be given as much importance as the development of the Jews.

These are the basic points of the recommendations worked out by the committee, and presented for the approval of the governments of the US and Britain.

The published report of the committee roused a storm of protest in the Arab countries: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and in the Muslim part of India. In the countries of the Arab East there were strikes, public meetings and speeches against the committee's report, which was

---

(cont.) had requested the emigration of 206 Soviet Jews to Palestine. The British request apparently referred to Palestinian Jews who, visiting eastern Europe prior to WWII, found themselves on annexed Soviet territory in the wake of the Molotov–Ribbentroop Pact. According to Maliarov, Vyshinskii remarked that he preferred providing these Soviet citizens with Soviet passports and leaving them in Palestine (AVP RF, f.0118, op.10, p.5, d.7, l.1). British sources corroborate that the British representative in Moscow had asked Vyshinskii to grant Jewish citizens of Palestine, currently on the territory of the USSR, permission to emigrate to Palestine (F.K. Roberts to A. Vyshinskii, 10 September 1945, PRO FO 371/45396).

Doc. 59

1. See 'Report of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry Regarding the Future of European Jewry and Palestine, 30 April 1946', in Cohen, *The Anglo-American Committee on Palestine 1945–1946*, pp. 136–218.

regarded as an effort by Britain, in collaboration with and under cover of the US, to organize a new military, economic and political bridgehead, a second 'independent Transjordan'[2] in the Near East.

Britain's position on the Palestine question is quite clear: side by side with Transjordan, the British government is trying to create in Palestine a new bridgehead in the Near East, which will ensure that British oil has an outlet to the Mediterranean, and to use Palestine to complete the chain of states under British control.

The British have involved the US in the solution of the Palestine problem in order to divert from Britain the Arab countries' attacks on the policy of gaining control of Palestine, and to set Arab public opinion against the US, thereby weakening the American position in the countries of the Arab East, in particular Saudi Arabia.

However, the US has been drawn into the Palestine tangle not only at the invitation of the British, but also in order to establish themselves, in addition to Saudi Arabia, on the shores of the Mediterranean, close to the sources of oil in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon. The US is also interested in the Palestinian ports for the export of its own Arabian oil. Lastly, the United States government is under great pressure from powerful American Zionist capitalists, who have invested considerable capital in Palestine, and who continue to do so. (At present, foreign capital in Palestine has reached the sum of $500,000,000 and American Zionist capitalists are working on a plan for the irrigation and electrification of Palestine,[3] which will require new capital investment amounting to £43,700,000; during the war alone, Zionist capital opened 432 new industrial enterprises in Palestine.)

Britain and the US are working together but outside the United Nations in an attempt to prolong the validity of the British mandate for Palestine, on the pretext that any radical solution of the Palestinian problem would at the present moment result in civil war in Palestine. Their argument, that while the disorders there continue the country must remain under the British Mandate and military occupation, is clear evidence that they aim to prevent the interference of other states in the solution of the Palestine problem until Palestine is completely in British and American possession.

Our silence on the Palestine question could be interpreted by the US, Britain, the Arabs and the Jews as a degree of compliance on the part of the Soviet Union with the committee's proposals. Bearing this in mind, and also considering that official and unofficial representatives of the Arab countries and Jewish organizations are turning to the Soviet government for a solution to the Palestine problem, we think it expedient to present our point of view in two or three articles in the press. Our diplomatic representatives could then

---

2. On 22 March 1946 Great Britain relinquished its mandatory rule over Transjordan and concluded with it a 25-year treaty of alliance which maintained British military rights in that country.
3. This presumably refers to the Jordan Valley Authority power and irrigation scheme elaborated by Walter Lowdermilk of the US Department of Agriculture in 1944 (see Doc. 29 and n. 2 there).

refer to these articles in private conversation if Arab or Jewish representatives raise the matter with them.

Our position on the Palestine question should, evidently, consist of the following points:

1. The Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry, which was formed without the participation of the United Nations, was not competent to discuss this question, or to solve the Palestine problem without the participation of the directly interested parties.
2. The Jewish question in Europe can not be resolved by the immigration of Jews to Palestine, since only the complete destruction of all the roots of fascism and the democratization of the European countries can give the Jewish masses normal living conditions.
3. The British Mandate for Palestine must be annulled, since it makes the solution of the Palestine question more difficult, and creates a threat to security in the Middle East. Foreign troops must be withdrawn from Palestine.
4. There must be a United Nations trusteeship regime for Palestine, which will create the necessary conditions for the formation of an independent and democratic Palestine.

We ourselves must not raise the Palestine question for discussion at the United Nations. It must be raised by the Arab members of the UN, and we should only express our point of view and defend it.

The publication of articles on the Palestine question may be expediently postponed until after the forthcoming session of the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs has finished its work.[4]

M. Maksimov

60
N. Goldmann to L. Toledano[1] (New York)

COPY: CZA Z6/11/17
[New York] 21 May 1946

Dear Mr. Toledano,

I am enclosing herewith the memorandum on the question which we discussed.

Doc. 59

4. This session of the Council of Foreign Ministers was scheduled to take place from 15 June to 17 July 1946. At the top of the document the following typewritten notes are appended: 'To Comrade Molotov: For my part, I think these proposals are generally acceptable. I ask your instructions. V. Dekanozov, 20.5'; 'Comrades Vyshinskii, Lozovskii, Dekanozov: It should be discussed, 27.5, Molotov.'

Doc. 60

1. Vincente Lombardo Toledano, Mexican labour leader, vice-president of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

I am really very grateful to you for your willingness to discuss this matter with the Soviet government, and I am hopeful that you may be successful in your mission.

Please be good enough to let me know when you return to New York from Moscow so that I may have an opportunity of seeing you again and listen to the result of your conversations.[2]

With renewed thanks and best wishes to you and Mrs. Toledano for a pleasant trip.

Very sincerely yours,

Nahum Goldmann

* * *

Secret

MEMORANDUM

For many years the Jewish Agency for Palestine has been trying to enter into conversations with the Soviet government in regard to the Jewish and Palestine problem.

Representatives of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, including myself, have had many discussions with Soviet Russian ambassadors and representatives in Washington, Mexico, Paris, London and other places. However, none of these representatives was in a position to indicate the attitude of Soviet Russia concerning the Palestine problem.

It was suggested many times that an opportunity be given to the representatives of the Jewish Agency for Palestine to proceed to Moscow for discussions with the leaders of the Soviet government, but no reply to this question was ever received from Moscow. The result of this situation is that all the conversations concerning Palestine are being held with the British and American governments which creates the impression that we on our side, want to discuss this problem only with these two governments and exclude Soviet Russia, whereas as a matter of fact, the policy of the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the Zionist movement has always been to regard Zionism as an international problem and to get the support and good will of all peoples and governments for it.

There is another consideration which has to be kept in mind. Five Arab states are recognized by Soviet Russia and have their ministers and ambassadors in Moscow, and the Soviet government has its ministers and ambassadors in the Arab capitals. In this way, the Arab states have access to the Soviet government and can always discuss their problems and make their suggestions.

We, not being a government and not having a normal representation in Moscow, do not have this opportunity and, therefore, the Soviet government

2. No information about whether the enclosed memorandum was delivered to Soviet officials or about any further meeting between Goldmann and Toledano has been traced.

knows only the Arab side of the case and is not being presented with the Jewish side of the Palestine problem.

The Palestine question will most probably come up before the United Nations in the near future. The Arab states hint at the possibility of submitting the report of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry to the meeting of the Security Council. The Palestine problem in general will have to be taken up by the United Nations in the near future. It is, therefore, also in the interest of the Soviet government to obtain all the facts of the problem and be acquainted with Jewish demands and suggestions for the solution of this problem.

Arab propaganda always tries to create the impression that the Soviet government would support the Arabs. I do not believe that this is the case but the fact that the Zionist movement has no possibility to take up its problems with the Soviet government, whereas the Arabs do, has created the impression in large Jewish circles that the Soviet government is committed to support the Arab case.

For all these reasons we feel that the time has come that an opportunity be given to the representatives of the Jewish Agency for Palestine to discuss the Palestine problems with the Soviet government either in Moscow or with Mr. Molotov in some other place which he may choose. Before the Soviet government takes a definite position on the Palestine problem, the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the Jewish people have certainly a right to ask to be heard and be given an opportunity to state their views and arguments to the Soviet government.

61
L. Tarnopoler to the Board of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR

COPY: CZA S25/486
Jerusalem, 22 May 1946

I deem it important to bring to your attention a concise summary of my conversation with the Soviet consul, Mr. Agaronov.[1]
Question: What is the USSR's stand on the Palestine question?
Answer: He cannot offer a clear reply at this time. But it is clear to him that sooner or later the Palestine question will be raised at the UN General Assembly, and naturally his government's representatives will then clarify the USSR's position on the subject.

1. Reuben Agaronov, Soviet vice-consul in Beirut, visited Palestine in May 1946 and, according to a British mandatory police surveillance report, on 7 May met with a delegation of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR headed by Tarnopoler, Tsirulnikov and Itkin of the Poale Zion (Hagana Archives. Temp 15.131; original in mandatory Criminal Investigation Department archives microfilm 274, p. 467).

Q: Would it be correct to assume, based on Serezhin's article in *Novoe vremia*,[2] that the Soviet government has deviated from the stand which was taken by the delegation of Soviet trade unions at the international conference in London?[3]

A: He does not think that the support of the Soviet delegation for the above-mentioned resolution was merely a passing episode. What was afterwards published in the Soviet press does not support the assumption of the Soviet government's departure from the line reflected in the London resolution. He himself is not aware of any reason which could motivate the USSR government to deviate from the stand taken by the delegation in London. This should not be construed to mean that the Soviet government, by supporting the London resolution, has become pro-Zionist. We have yet to be convinced that the Zionist movement, as the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, is independent and autonomous, as befits a true national liberation movement. While we are aware that strong and influential progressive elements are represented in the Zionist movement, the movement as a whole is not independent, in other words it is not autonomous in setting its policy.

Q: Our press reported that Lozovskii[4] was charged with investigating the Jewish problem and that the results of his study will serve as background material for the Soviet government in determining its stand on the Zionist demands of the Jewish people. What is the truth of this report?

A: He does not know anything about it. Perhaps. I have already said that the USSR government will soon formulate its stand on this question. The Soviet government is very interested in knowing what the Jewish proposals are for untangling the political knot that has been created here. The material that I collected on this question does not seem to be sufficiently reliable. The fact is that the information I received, for example, from a certain source in February, includes facts and assumptions which completely contradict the facts that are included in the information I was given in April.

Q: May I know what will be done with the vast amount of material – testimonies given before the commission of enquiry – with which I provided you?

A: All this material will be immediately translated into Russian and transferred to the government of the USSR. At the same time, he added, his government wishes to obtain basic, objective material on the political situation in Palestine and on the various proposals which the Jews have raised and will raise to resolve the complex political problems.

---

2. Tarnopoler was referring to the article signed by K. Serezhin, 'Problems of the Arab East' dated 1 February 1946, which revealed plans for establishing a Jewish state in Palestine but expressed doubts over the prospects for absorption of European Jews there.
3. See Doc. 44, n. 1.
4. Solomon Lozovskii, deputy foreign minister had responsibility for the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.

Q: Would you agree to having me arrange a meeting for you with the board of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR?
A: After I speak with the minister, I will be more than willing to meet with the league's board in early June.

62
'P.'[1] to the Political Department of the Jewish Agency (Jerusalem)

COPY: CZA S25/486
[Cairo] 12 June 1946

I had a long talk with Mr. A. Shvedov, the first secretary of the Soviet legation. The meeting took place in the legation and was also attended by Mr. Kahanov of the Zionist Federation and Mr. Gnedykh of the legation's staff.

I told Mr. Shvedov about the different political and cultural ties which connect the Jewish Palestine with Soviet Russia and about the great interest the Jews have in everything which concerns the Russian upbuilding and her appearance on the international stage. I reminded him of the different efforts which were done during the last five years in order to establish cultural and commercial relations, through personal contacts, memorandums and different publications. I told him that notwithstanding all that we did not succeed to establish relations we would like to have and we do not feel that our struggle i[s] sufficiently understood. I pointed out that many articles appearing in the Soviet press are far from being sympathetic. That the opinions attributed to Mr. Solod, the Soviet Minister to Lebanon, are even hostile and that during the last month Moscow Radio was giving only the Arab reactions on the Anglo-American report[2] without mentioning the Jewish case at all. I added that we deeply regret all that and that the aim of my visit is to talk it over and to try again to establish the proper contacts in various fields.

Mr. Shvedov: The insufficient reporting of the Jewish case in Soviet press is probably due to the fact that we do not have a TASS Correspondent in Palestine. As you know, the British government does not allow us to have one down there. But the Palestine question does interest the Soviet government and the fact that three deputies to the Minister of Foreign Affairs are Jews[3] assures that this case gets a square deal. The views of Solod attributed to him by the Lebanese press were later denied. The fact that his name always appears in connection with such news is due to Palestine being under his jurisdiction and not ours.

---

1. See Doc. 55, n. 1.
2. The Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry published its recommendations on 30 April 1946. It rejected the Arab and Jewish political solutions, suggesting instead a continuation of the British mandatory regime, until a UN trusteeship could be established. It recommended abrogating the restriction on Jewish land purchase and the immediate immigration of 100,000 Jewish displaced persons from Europe to ease their plight (see also Doc. 59).
3. Namely, Litvinov, Maiskii and Lozovskii.

But I will say more. The Soviet government has actually a definite point of view on the Palestine question and it expressed it a few times. The point of view is that Britain must leave Palestine and let the Jews and the Arabs decide the fate of the country between themselves. You know very well that our policy was always to let people of each country decide their own fate.

Shvedov: But coming back to the relations between Palestine and Soviet Russia and your efforts to establish and promote these relations: here I have something to say, as the first secretary of the legation and as a previous worker in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Let us begin with the ambulances which you sent as presents to Tehran.[4] We were very glad to have them, met nicely your delegates, arranged parades etc. What do the delegates do? In the same Tehran they appear in different meetings, even in Persian factories, telling the dirtiest stories about Soviet Russia.

And now let us take your leaders. I regret to say that the speeches of Mr. Ben-Gurion do not differ much from the fascists'. About half a year ago, I was in Turkey and the Turkish newspapers published his speech in which he said that Hitler's system and methods were the best and that it is necessary to educate the Palestinian youths in this spirit. Of course I sent all these papers to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and they made there the proper impression. But he is not the only one. The speeches of Mr. Shertok are actually not much better. Of course both of them do not need my approval but I think it is good to mention it to you.

I also think that your press is extremely unfair. My friend Gnedykh was in Palestine and, being introduced to some newspaper men, asked them 'How do you do', and these newspapermen published immediately an interview with Gnedich which he never gave, attributing [to] him things he never said, and were responsible for a long and unpleasant correspondence between us and Moscow.

You speak about cultural relations. But you must know that all the materials we are sending to the V League never reach the population. The pamphlets and books are burnt and the records broken by them. We are getting hundreds of letters from Palestinian friends who explain to us that the V League is in the hand[s] of people who want to prevent any relations with Soviet Russia.

When your orchestra was in Cairo, I proposed them to arrange a concert of Slavic music. Their manager asked for this concert five thousand pounds. Of course if people want to make profits on our friendship that will not bring you far. Two days later the same manager asked me to arrange a trip of the orchestra to Russia, saying that they are friends of Soviet Russia. I answered him that we do not need such friends.

You mentioned the printed material you are sending to Russia. I saw all of it when I was working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They actually remained in my department without going further. All this material was pure

4. See Doc. 27, n. 4.

propaganda and did not give any picture or understanding of Palestine. And even these ones were extremely one-sided. Reading them, it is possible to think that Arabs do not exist in Palestine at all. And you know that we consider that every nation has a right for a place under the sun, especially when this nation lives on its own land.

I am not a specialist in commercial questions, and we do not deal here with Palestinian commerce because it is in the hands of our Lebanese legation, where Mr. Dneprov is in charge of it. But I can [say] that we are not very interested in this moment in trading with Palestine. But even trade on a small scale is difficult because your commercial methods are not very fair and Soviet Russia is used to clean and honest dealings. When Dneprov came to Palestine, one of the big Jewish firms contacted him immediately and warned him not to trade with Arabs because all of them are thieves. Of course Dneprov answered that his first visit will be to the Arabs.

When I was in Moscow we were used to receive dozens of commercial letters from the Middle East. The ones from Palestine were always put aside to be read last as the least reliable. They were making the most insignificant offers. The copies of these letters were usually sent in the same time to Stalin and Molotov. Many of the correspondents advised not to deal with the [competitors] because they are dishonest.

But people who tried to trade had a very bad experience. The Yugoslavs for instance advised us to be careful in trading with Palestine. One of the Palestine firms ordered cement from Yugoslavia and when it arrived by boat [they] refused to accept it because meanwhile the firm got a cheaper proposition from somebody else.

But commercial relations are not my field. What concerns the cultural ones, do write us a letter with concrete propositions on the lines you developed here and we will discuss it again. I would be ready to start our cultural relations with an exhibition of reproduction of Russian sculpture, if you will organize it in an unprofiteering manner. Of course it would be good if such an exhibition would be arranged by a mixed Arab–Jewish Institute. In general I think it would be advisable instead of the V League to create a new group of real friends of Soviet Russia, young and energetic, and to such a group we could give a real help. And as you know we have enough possibilities to help if we want to.

My impression of the conversation is the following one. It was explained to us:

1) that in the crisis today the world is split in two and every country and nation must give a definite answer with whom it stands;

2) that the world is on the eve of great events and talks about culture and commerce are not sufficient in order to establish proper relations;

3) that there are forces in Zionism which understand the situation and go much farther in their propositions.

P.

63
E. Sasson to E. Epstein (Washington)

COPY: CZA S25/485
Jerusalem, 28 June 1946

Dear Eliahu – Shalom,

In today's letter I want to try to explain to you Russia's attitude towards the question of Palestine and the Arab East as I understand it from reading the press and holding conversations with [various] people:

Although Russia's stand on Palestine has not yet been sufficiently defined, it is becoming increasingly clear that the Soviets tend to ascribe to the Palestine question international importance on a par with the other Middle Eastern issues over which Russia and England are at loggerheads, such as Libya, Italy, Greece, Turkey, and so forth. The Soviets cannot accept that Britain will try to resolve the issues of the East alone and according to its interests, without involving Russia at least to the same degree as it does the United States. Russia expressed its anger most vigorously at these developments upon the annulment of the mandate over Transjordan, its declaration as an independent state, and the signing of a military agreement with England enabling the latter to maintain indefinitely armed forces in Transjordan and along its borders.[1] The agreement transforms Transjordan into a British military base which dominates all the Arab countries and which may, at a certain juncture, serve Britain as a 'springboard' to reach Russia's border. But if Russia was unable to oppose that agreement, it is trying to thwart it and render it worthless by intervening indirectly in the Palestine issue. Russia believes that if the Palestine question remains pending, if the Arab–Jewish dispute deteriorates, if Britain finds itself in a situation in which it cannot accede either to the requests of the Arabs or of the Jews, then ultimately the question will inevitably be raised in an international forum of which Russia is a member. [Russia] will then obtain the formal authority to intervene in the Palestine question, and through it in other Middle East issues. Hence, also, its opposition to the recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry. Hence its instructions to all communist agents, ambassadors and parties in the Middle East to bring pressure to bear on all Arab statesmen to raise the Palestine question and every other issue relating to the Arab East before the Security Council or the United [Nations] Organization.

What conclusions can we draw from all this? To begin with, it should be noted that this is consistent with the Soviet foreign policy line: not to allow England to be the only Western power that directs the political affairs of the East. Second, to encourage all opposition to England's policy in the Middle East, whether it be on the part of the Jews or Arabs in Palestine; the Kurds or

1. See Doc. 59, n. 2.

Shi'ites in Iraq; the Wafd or the government in Egypt; the radicals or moderates in Lebanon and in Syria. All means leading to that end are justified in Soviet eyes, even if they sometimes seem to be self-contradictory and to sow confusion and bewilderment among people. For example, this is why Russia is following so closely the development of relations between Britain and Egypt, and the Soviet press scrupulously reports every anti-British opinion, action, and demonstration in Egypt, whether emanating from the Wafd, Misr al-Fatath, the Muslim Brotherhood – or by the leaders of the Egyptian government and other moderate bodies.[2] The trial of the murderers of Amin Osman Pasha[3] in Egypt, for example, is extensively covered in the Soviet press and is described as being at bottom an anti-British act, aimed at expelling the British from the Nile Valley.

At the same time, the Soviets have adopted a reverse political tactic: not to report in their press any declarations by radical Arab leaders on the need to solicit help from Russia. Nor do they offer encouragement to Arabs who are urging that Arab delegations be sent to Russia. The reason is simple: first, they do not want, for example, to take a stand in the Jewish–Arab conflict in Palestine either on the side of the Jews or of the Arabs. Nor do they wish to take a stand in the Arab–Kurd dispute in Iraq on one side or the other. Second, they want to appear as a factor in the Arab East, intervening in its issues and directing its affairs, without paying any sort of price. They want to intervene in Eastern affairs legitimately, through international institutions, and not through the aegis of an Arab or any other element in the East. They think that the conciliatory course being followed by England in the East is not very successful. It is a course that obligates England to pay nine per cent in order to get the tenth; for example, in order to retain its transportation routes with India, or in order to preserve its share of the oil in the East – England is today paying the Arabs enormous prices: the evacuation of Syria and Lebanon, the evacuation of Egypt, Transjordan's independence, amendment of the treaty with Iraq, a conflict with the Jewish people, American economic inroads in the Arab world, a dispute with France, and above all – the creation of the Arab League. Russia is unwilling to countenance all this. Russia wants to receive and not to give. Russia wants to direct matters, not to be directed by others.

This is the picture as I see it from here, and it is, I believe, very close to the truth. And if so, we have nothing to fear from the referral of the Palestine question to the Security Council or the United Nations. Not only is there no reason to expect Russian policy to be hostile to us, there are grounds for thinking it will be friendly. Not out of sympathy to us or out of hatred towards the Arabs, but in order to settle political accounts with England. If anyone is liable to lose, it is first of all the Arabs and the English. The former will have to accept Russia's supervision, and the latter its participation in all matters

2. Egyptian nationalist and ultra-nationalist political organizations.
3. Sir Amin Osman Pasha, Egyptian minister of finance, murdered in January 1946.

relating to the East. Legitimate supervision and legitimate participation. Supervision which may undermine the entire political and social structure throughout the Arab East, and participation that may limit even more the evolution of self-government in the Arab East. Nor can it be ruled out that what happened in Persia[4] will not repeat itself throughout the East and bring about the re-emergence of an array of small Arab and non-Arab states in the East, which will hamper the Arab League and interfere with every new Arab alliance.

[...][5]

Yours,

E.S.

64
V.Z. Lebedev to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.07, OP.12A, P.42, D.6, LL.42–3
[Warsaw] 12 July 1946
Secret

To the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Com. A.Ia. Vyshinskii,

In May this year a group of leaders of Jewish democratic parties arrived in Poland from Palestine in order to learn about the position of Jews in Europe, and to organize aid for them and the immigration of some of them to Palestine.[1]

The delegation was led by members of the Central Committee of the Palestine League for Friendly Relations with the USSR, Levite and Erem (left-wing members of Poale Zion) and Barzilai (of the Hashomer Hatsair Workers' Party), who made great efforts, through Berman and other Polish democratic politicians, to arrange a meeting with me. On my instructions they were seen by the embassy counsellor, Iakovlev.

It became clear from the conversation that the Palestinian delegation had come to Poland in the hope of using their stay here to arrange a visit to the USSR through the Soviet embassy. Their aim is to inform leading Soviet

---

Doc. 63

4. Reference is apparently to the events in northern Iran, where the autonomous republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of the Kurdish People (with its capital in Mahabad), were established in December 1945 under the auspices of the Soviet armed forces which had not yet evacuated the northern part of Iran. Iran regained control of both provinces only at the end of 1946, granting the provinces a measure of autonomy.
5. The concluding passage which transmits greetings of a personal nature, has been omitted.

Doc. 64

1. For further information about this mission see Ro'i, *Soviet Decision Making in Practice*, pp. 30–2.

personalities about the situation in Palestine, and to gain the support of the Soviet government in organizing independent existence and statehood for the Jewish population of Palestine.

The delegates expressed their opinion on the Palestine question to Iakovlev. Their views are set out in several special memoranda which they gave Iakovlev, and which are enclosed.

Iakovlev understood from the conversations that both the representatives of the Poale Zion left wing (Levite and Erem) and of Hashomer Hatsair (Barzilai) are struggling to save what is left of the Jewish population in Europe, and to send Jews to Palestine. The difference of view between Poale Zion and Hashomer Hatsair on the Palestinian state structure is that Poale Zion believes in the creation of an independent Jewish state, while Hashomer Hatsair, taking account of the fact that Arabs make up half the population of Palestine, aims at the creation in Palestine of a federal Arab–Jewish state with two national assemblies.

The delegates of both groups represent parties which stand for firm friendship with the USSR. Levite and Barzilai told Iakovlev that they were extremely worried by Britain's intention to turn Palestine into an armed base for British imperialism in the Middle East and to involve the ruling clique in the Arab countries in its hazardous policy.

Iakovlev replied with some reservation to the delegates' request to visit the Soviet Union, and suggested that they make the appropriate applications for visas (Barzilai had already submitted an application before the conversation with Iakovlev and had been refused permission for the visit by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR).

At present Levite, who made the impression of being the ablest member of the delegation, has left for Paris, but Erem and Barzilai are still in Poland. Levite and Erem expressed their wish to visit the USSR to Counsellor Iakovlev only verbally.

Ambassador of the USSR in Poland
Lebedev

65
D.S. Solod to I.V. Samylovskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.2, D.6, LL.167–72
[Beirut] 13 August 1946
Secret

To the Director of the Near East Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Comrade I.V. Samylovskii,

Further to our minute No. 272/S of 30.7.1946:

I am enclosing certain material from the local press on the Palestine question, in particular comments on the British government's proposed plan for a federal structure in Palestine.

It can be seen from this material that, as early as 10 July of this year, the British newspaper *The Times* reported that some Anglo-American circles considered it necessary to partition Palestine. Three weeks later, on 31 July, British Deputy Prime Minister Herbert Morrison put to the House of Commons the British plan for the partition of Palestine into four zones: one Arab, one Jewish, the holy places and the Negev.[1]

The most important and fundamental point, of which we should take note, is the detachment of the Negev – the desert area of southern Palestine – as an independent zone, which, according to the British plan, would come entirely under British administration, since neither 'a local administration' nor 'parliament' could be formed in this area, as is proposed for the other zones, for the simple reason that there is no population in the Negev.

Plenty of information suggests that the British singled out the Negev as an independent zone for the following two reasons:

1. When they form a federal Palestinian 'state', the British will have to cover it with the figleaf of 'trusteeship' or even 'independence', which could in certain circumstances make it difficult for them to keep their armed forces in Palestine. This in turn could only impede the links of their troops in Transjordan with the ports on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. Again, although no one is yet saying what particular piece of land is understood by the 'Negev region', or what towns or settlements in southern Palestine would be included in it, there is enough evidence for us to say with confidence that the British will choose the port of Gaza as the centre of the Negev region. In short, the British authorities' selection of the Negev as an independent zone is prompted in the first place by their strategic plan to turn Transjordan and the southern part of Palestine into a general military bridgehead, in case for any reason the British have to withdraw their troops from the Arab and Jewish parts of Palestine.

---

1. See 'Extract from the Speech by Herbert Morrison in the House of Commons on 31 July, 1946' in Cohen, *The British Decision to Evacuate Palestine*, pp. 8–13.

It should be added that the creation of such a strategic bridgehead in the Negev area would completely isolate Egypt from Syria, Lebanon and northern Palestine by a cordon of British troops.

2. Apart from these British military and strategic reasons for separating the Negev, they also want to use it to dupe the Americans.

In my letter No. 05/S of 3 January this year,[2] I noted that a certain clash of interests between the British and the Americans could be detected over Palestine, namely that the Americans are seeking a solution to the Palestine question which will enable them to bring the Arabian oil pipeline to the eastern coast of the Mediterranean without passing through British territories or territories under British influence. For the Americans, one of the most suitable ports on the eastern coast of the Mediterrranean is the Palestinian port of Gaza – if it would be assigned to the Jewish zone or Jewish province, as it is called in the British plan for the partition of Palestine.

By making the Negev region a special zone under British rule, the British are quite openly opposing these unspoken but scarcely disguised American intentions. They have, in reality, deprived the Americans of the main factor which could have justified their agreement to the partition of Palestine.

In connection with this British ruse, President Truman, as was to be expected, has refused to approve the British plan for the partition of Palestine, and has thereby seriously upset the British plans as a whole.[3]

I think that the main reason why Truman rejected the British plan is the detachment of the Negev region. Confirmation of this may be found in the fact that the Americans do not reject the idea of a partition of Palestine in principle but only the British plan.

Thus, for instance, today's local newspapers carry reports that the Americans are putting forward their own plan for the partition of Palestine, not into four parts, as the British have proposed, but only into two. Apparently this means three parts, since the Americans have no reason to object to treating the holy places, i.e., the towns of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, as a separate region.

This is what the newspapers say about the American plan:

The New York correspondent of the *Evening News* gives the following four points in the American experts' plan for the partition of Palestine:

1. The partition of Palestine into two zones, one Arab and one Jewish, with the Jewish zone considerably larger than that which is proposed in the British plan – 4900 square km. instead of 2900 square km.

2. General autonomy for the Jews in their zone, and a limitation of the powers of the British high commissioner.

---

2. Doc. 56.
3. Truman received the Morrison-Grady proposals on Palestine on 29 July 1946. On the next day, Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson informed the British ambassador in the US that the president could not make a statement supporting the recommendations (see *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. VII, pp. 673–4).

3. The Jews themselves are to determine the upper limit of immigration.

4. The United States is prepared to finance operation for an agreed-upon period.

This American plan clearly reveals the Anglo-American differences on the Palestine question – differences which are linked to the aim of both sides to consolidate their hold on the southern part of the Palestine coast of the Mediterranean. True, one cannot yet infer that these differences will lead to a deterioration of Anglo-American relations, but it is plainly a sign of things to come.

Among other remarks we should note former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill's statement in the House of Commons that if the Arabs resist British intentions for Palestine, they should be told that British troops will remain in Egypt.[4] To be sure, there is no reason to suppose that British troops really will leave Egypt if the Arabs accept British measures for Palestine, but Churchill's political blackmail will make it easier for the local British stooges to make a deal with the British, since this will even more obviously justify their actions by presenting them as measures taken in a desperate situation.

Another extraordinarily significant development in the Palestine question is the answer given by Ahmad al-Shuqayri, the leader of the Arab Bureau,[5] to a question about the Arabs' attitude to Russian intervention in the Palestine problem. 'I personally think', said Shuqayri, 'that Russia has every reason to intervene. Russia is the state which freed itself from racial and religious differences in the most auspicious manner.'

This statement provoked an immediate painful reaction from London, where it was noted, in the first place, that Shuqayri's statement was just his personal opinion and did not reflect the point of view of the Arab Bureau. At the same time a most effective device was brought into play, because the communist parties of Palestine and Lebanon were immediately entangled in the matter, and to be accused of Communist Party membership has now become quite dangerous here.

The appearance of such a cavalier and insolent British plan for the partition of Palestine, and such a barefaced seizure of the southern part of the country, turning it into an uncontrolled British possession, has become possible, thanks to the position of capitulation to the British adopted by the heads of the Arab states at the conference at Inshas on 28–29 May,[6] and by the Arab political

4. In December 1945, Egypt and Britain began negotiating a possible revision of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 21 August 1936. The Egyptian side demanded immediate withdrawal of British troops and military installations and unification with the Sudan. Britain was prepared to discuss the expiry of the treaty on the condition that it was replaced by a defence pact that would satisfy British strategic requirements in the canal zone.

5. In 1945–46 Shuqayri was Director of the Arab Bureau – the Palestinian–Arab propaganda office which operated first in the US and later in Jerusalem.

6. The Inshas meeting of Arab rulers followed publication of the recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry. The meeting called for the establishment of Palestine as an independent state, a halt to Jewish immigration and Jewish land purchase, and the financial support for Palestinian Arabs.

leaders at the Special Session of the Arab League Council in Bludan on 8–12 June this year.[7]

It is still difficult to predict how the Palestine question will be resolved, since the last word on a solution to the Arabs' difficult position will come from the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Arab League countries which opened yesterday in Alexandria. Still, based on all the material attached to this report, there is every reason to believe that the present Arab leaders will give way again. First, no one among them will dare to raise his voice against the British, which would result in dependence on the broad Arab masses, and secondly, they all dread a widespread movement of the masses, who are mostly anti-British, and who could, if brought into play, overwhelm the present collection of Arab 'politicians'.

Minister Solod

Appendix to text: 40 pp.[8]

66
K.D. Golubev to A.A. Smirnov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.2, D.7, LL.16–17
Moscow, 4 September 1946
Secret

To the Director of the Third European Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Comrade A.A. Smirnov,

1. This is to inform you that, according to a despatch from Colonel Starov,[1] our representative on questions of repatriation in Austria, a movement of Jews has begun in Poland, heading for Palestine through Czechoslovak territory and the Soviet zone of Austria.[2] Altogether some 200,000 Jews are on their way to Palestine.

Doc. 65

7. At Bludan, Syria, the Arab League called for the disarmament of the Zionists in Palestine, formation of a special fund for Palestine, and establishment of a Supreme Arab Committee to deal with the Palestine issue. If the implementation of the recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee were accepted, the Arab countries would not grant the US and Great Britain any industrial concessions, and would boycott them on moral grounds and complain to the UN.
8. On file.

Doc. 66

1. Colonel Starov, head of the POW and DP division in the Soviet Allied Commission for Austria.
2. The flight of Polish Jews actually began at the end of 1944. According to estimates, from the end of 1944 to June 1945, 12,000–14,000 Jews left Poland for the Western-occupied-zones of Germany from July 1945 to December 1945, some 38,000 Jews; from January 1946 to December 1946, nearly 90,000 Jews; and in January–February 1947, 2,730; i.e., a total of some 140,000. The number for September 1946 was between 15 and 17 thousand (see Cohen, *Ovrim kol gvul*, p. 468).

In answer to our enquiry, Colonel Konev, our representative dealing with repatriation in Poland, reported:

A number of sources have confirmed the figure of 150–180,000 Jews who are travelling not only across Czechoslovak territory but also via Polish ports.

According to the available data, the trains with these refugees are making for Munich, in the American zone of occupation, where there is said to be a mustering point for onward travel to Palestine. The departure of the trains from Poland is to take place at an unknown date, passing through the town of Glatz (Czechoslovakia).[3]

The main contingent of Jews consists of members of the Zionist and [Hashomer Hatsair][4] parties and other small groups.

In Warsaw there is a Jewish Central Committee,[5] to which a representative of the American government is appointed;[6] and in the provinces and villages there are Jewish committees which ensure that Jews traveling to Palestine get free transport and food.

During the period 15–25 July 1946, the British interfered with the transit of Jews, with the result that a number of ships were sent back to the ports of departure.

2. In August, in the area near the camp of Bruck in Austria, about 800 Jews congregated,[7] having come from Poland, allegedly 'because of oppression by the Poles'.[8]

These Jews have been approaching our officers working on the repatriation of Soviet citizens with questions and requests for their return to the Soviet Union, giving as the reason for their request that some of them were handed over to Poland in 1940 on an exchange basis in accordance with an agreement between the two governments.[9]

---

3. An industrial town and a railway junction in Lower Silesia. In Polish – Kłodzko.
4. Original garbled and reading is conjectural.
5. The Jewish Central Committee was established in November 1944, with Dr. Emil Sommerstein as its president. It consisted of 30 members, 17 of them representing Zionist parties.
6. The reference is apparently to Walter Bein, who served as representative of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee in Poland.
7. Presumably the DP camp not far from Bruck-an-der-Mur, Steiermark (Styria), in the British zone of occupation.
8. Between November 1944 and October 1945, 351 Jews had been murdered in Poland. On 4 July 1946, 41 Jews were killed during the Kielce pogrom (see Bauer, *Flight and Rescue*, pp. 115, 208).
9. The claim for repatriation to the USSR was apparently based on the Agreement on Option and Evacuation of Persons of Polish and Jewish Nationality Residing in the USSR concluded between the [Polish] Provisional Government of National Unity and the Government of the USSR in Moscow on 6 July 1945. According to this agreement, Poles and Jews who until 17 September 1939 possessed Polish nationality and thereafter, during World War II, lived in territory belonging to the USSR, received the right to give up their Soviet nationality and to resettle in Poland (see *Documents on Polish–Soviet Relations*, Vol. 2, p. 661). By the end of June 1946, the Central Jewish Committee in Warsaw and its local branches had registered 157,420 repatriates from the Soviet Union. Of these, 129,975 had returned between February and June 1946 in 203 transports (see Litvak, 'Polish-Jewish Refugees Repatriated from the Soviet Union', p. 235).

Since this question does not come within the scope of our directorate, I would be grateful for information as to what organization deals with this matter and how our representatives should respond to such requests.

Deputy Plenipotentary of the Council of Ministers
of the USSR on Matters of Repatriation
Golubev[10]

67
M.A. Maksimov to V.G. Dekanozov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.2, D.7, LL.9–11
[Moscow] 6 September 1946
Secret

To Comrade V.G. Dekanozov,

The report and proposals of the Anglo-American Committee, which has been studying the Palestine question, were published on 30 April 1946.[1] They have aroused such strong objections from the Arab countries that the British and American governments have not ventured to put the committee's recommendations into practice.

In order to work out a new solution to the Palestine problem, the British and American governments set up the so-called Committee of Experts. On 27 July this year, the committee presented the two governments with its proposals, which were plainly incompatible with the previous Anglo-American Committee's report.

The Committee of Experts recommended to the US and Britain:

1. To divide Palestine into four provinces, of which one would be Jewish and another Arab, with two provinces under direct British rule.

2. These provinces should together form a single federal Palestinian state, to be ruled by a 'central' government under the direct control of the British high commissioner.

3. Britain should be responsible for the defence and foreign policy of the whole of Palestine, as well as with the police, communications, transport and the ports of Haifa and Jaffa.[2]

4. The Councils of Ministers of the 'autonomous' Arab and Jewish provinces should be appointed by the British high commissioner.

Doc. 66

10. In January 1945, Lt.-Gen. Konstantin Golubev, deputy commissioner on repatriation from October 1944, drew up, together with British and American representatives, a repatriation agreement which was signed at the Yalta conference on 11 February 1945. In May 1945 he headed the Soviet delegation on Soviet–American repatriation negotiations in Halle.

Doc. 67

1. See Doc. 65 and n. 1 there.
2. The plan referred only to Haifa harbour (see *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. VII, p. 657).

As a condition for the acceptance of this plan for the political structure of Palestine, the experts recommended the immediate admission of 100,000 Jewish settlers into Palestine.

The new plan for a solution to the Palestine problem gives the British complete control of the country, replacing the mandate system with a special federal structure in which Britain would be a permanent member of the federation alongside the Arabs and the Jews.

The British government has accepted the experts' proposals as a basis for the solution of the Palestine problem, but the US has not yet expressed its opinion, though the American press has observed that the British proposals for the partition of Palestine secure the British position there, but are less advantageous for the US.

Public opinion in the Arab countries has come out against the experts' proposals. The Arab Higher Committee in Palestine announced on 31 July that the Arabs would not agree to the partition of Palestine, since it would mean the loss of Palestine for the Arabs.

The Executive Committee of the Jewish Agency came out against the partition on 6 August, since such a partition does not give any independence to the Palestinian Jews, and the self-government of the autonomous provinces, as proposed in the plan, is illusory. However, the Zionists do not attack the experts' proposals strongly, since, failing the rapid transformation of Palestine into a Jewish state, these proposals do, at least, increase the flow of Jewish settlers to Palestine.

On 20 June, in order to exclude the US, which accepts the Zionist position, from the group of countries which are now deciding the fate of Palestine, the Egyptian government proposed to Britain that direct negotiations be initiated with Syria, Egypt, Transjordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Yemen for an agreement on the Palestine problem, with the aim of 'putting an end to the present situation and creating a new regime based on the conditions and goals expressed in the United Nations Charter'. A similar proposal has been made to Britain by the Iraqi government.

The British government has accepted the proposals and invited representatives of the Arab countries to discuss the Palestine question at a conference in London on 9 September. Representatives of the Jewish Agency for Palestine have also been invited to come to London to discuss the Palestine question.[3]

---

3. The London Conference on Palestine in fact opened on 9 September. The Zionist representatives declined the invitation to take part in the discussions, the former demanding the release of their leaders, who had been detained by the British in June 1946. There were, however, unofficial meetings with the Zionists. The Arabs were represented by members of the Arab League, but there were no representatives of the Palestinian Arabs. The Arab plan submitted to the conference called for the establishment of an independent state in Palestine after a two-year transition period, during which elections would be held. The conference was adjourned on 2 October, after having failed to reach agreement between the parties (see *Political Documents of the Jewish Agency*, Vol. I, Editorial Notes, pp. 587–8, 662).

If the proposed plan for the partition of Palestine is accepted by the conference, or if the British reach an agreement with the Jews and the Arabs on a different basis, which is similar to the plan for the partition, this will mean that the whole of Palestine will continue under British control for an indefinite period. We must respond to these prospective plans for the dismemberment of Palestine before the London Conference ends. It would be timely for us to publish one or two more articles in our press explaining the essence of the British plan.

When the question is dealt with in the press, we should start from the following basic premises:

1. The military regime set up by the British in Palestine and the presence of British troops there increase the threat to security in the Middle East. British troops must be withdrawn from Palestine.

2. Any attempts to reach a radical solution to the Palestine problem based on the existing mandate is doomed to failure since the very basis is rotten. The mandate must be abolished.

3. A radical solution to the Palestine problem and the establishment of an independent Palestine on a democratic basis must be achieved through a trusteeship arrangement under the United Nations.

I should be glad to have your comments.[4]

M. Maksimov

68
A.A. Smirnov, M.A. Maksimov, L.F. Teplov to V.G. Dekanozov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.2, D.7, LL.18–19
Moscow, 17 September 1946
Secret

To Comrade V.G. Dekanozov,

The Deputy Plenipotentiary of the Council of Ministers on repatriation, Lieutenant-General Golubev,[1] has reported that there is a mass exodus taking place of Jews who are trying to go to Palestine from Poland through

---

Doc. 67

4. On the last page of the document, above the text, is a handwritten note: 'For V. D[ekanozov], 6.4'.

Doc. 68

1. See Doc. 66.

Czechoslovakia and the Soviet zone of Austria. The number of Jews trying to get out is 150–180,000. Trains carrying the Jews are heading for Munich in the American zone of occupation, where there is said to be a mustering point for dispatching them on to Palestine. Comrade Osokin,[2] referring to his conversation with the leader of the Zionist organization in Hungary, reported on 10 September from Budapest that the Zionist Jews of Hungary also intended to leave for Palestine.

The departure of Jews from these countries to Palestine is being organized by the Zionist organizations. For this purpose a Zionist Jewish Central Committee has been formed in Warsaw, to which a representative of the American government is attached.

We consider it expedient to ask our ambassadors in Poland,[3] Romania[4] and Czechoslovakia,[5] and our ministers in Bulgaria[6] and Hungary,[7] for more detailed information on the activity of the Zionist organizations in these countries in connection with the measures which are being taken to organize the mass exodus of Jews to Palestine. At the same time we must warn our ambassadors and ministers in these countries that none of our personnel should become involved in any matters to do with the departure of Jews for Palestine.

A. Smirnov, M. Maksimov, L.F. Teplov

---

2. Osokin was apparently the director of Soviet counter-intelligence in Hungary. On 5 January 1945, Osokin and Major General Kuznetsov (Commander of NKVD troops at the Second Ukrainian Front) met the Hungarian prime minister, the minister of interior and the minister of education (Kuznetsov and Osokin to L.P. Beria, 6 January 1945; Konasov and Tereshchuk, 'Budut nemedlenno predany sudu voennogo', pp. 325–6).
3. Viktor Lebedev, from 1945 USSR ambassador to Poland, see Doc. 64.
4. Sergei Kavtaradze, ambassador to Romania from 1945.
5. Valerian Zorin, ambassador to Czechoslovakia from 1945.
6. Stepan Kirsanov, from August 1945, USSR minister in Bulgaria.
7. Georgii Pushkin, from 1945 political advisor of the Allied Control Commission in Hungary, and from October 1945, USSR minister in Hungary.

69
Memorandum by L. Gelber

COPY: CZA Z4/15279
[New York] 15 November 1946

MR. NOVIKOV AND MR. SUMNER WELLES

Second Thoughts on Palestine and the United Nations

The remarks of Mr. K.V. Novikov, delegate of the USSR in Committee Four, the United Nations General Assembly (November 11th),[1] constitute a general statement and bind nobody to concrete steps. Running through his observations, however – as of those of the Ukrainian and Belorussian delegates later in the week – is the premise that mandatory powers are obliged to say what they will do with all their mandates; with respect to Palestine some [--] least of British intentions was, he felt, required. Certainly it might be hard under the charter or the Assembly resolution of February 9th, 1946, to regard their obligations actually to convert mandates into trusteeships as a strictly legal one; a moral one seems clear. It may be added that Mr. Bevin has at no time committed His Majesty's government to any specific disposition of the Palestine mandate, though he has proposed trusteeship agreement for other territories such as the Cameroons, Togoland and Tanganyika.

Because of the ambiguities of the charter and the non-binding force of the Assembly resolution of February 9th, 1946,[2] one imagines that there will be no great alarm in London or Washington over one of Mr. Novikov's assertions:

> ... the attempts of the British government to solve the question on Palestine by negotiations with the United States government, as well as with Arab and Jewish representatives apart from the United Nations, does not correspond to the principles of the United Nations Charter which establishes a trusteeship system over non-self-governing territories, including former mandates.

1. In a general discussion about the implementation of the UN Charter's provisions, Soviet representative K. Novikov criticized Great Britain, Australia and South Africa for not complying with the UN decision and ending their mandates. He also complained about the delay in the establishment of the UN Trusteeship Council (see *GA OR, Second Part of the First Session*, Fourth Committee (trusteeship), 8th Meeting, 11 November 1946, pp. 87–92).
2. This resolution expressed regret that the projected Trusteeship Council had not materialized. It stated that any delay in implementing the system of trusteeship deprived the populations of the ex-mandatory territories of the benefits of self-rule and called for a rapid conclusion of the trusteeship agreements (see *GA OR, Resolutions Adopted by the General Assembly at the First Part of the First Session*, p. 13).

But another passage on Palestine from his speech may make a more serious impression:

> The fate of this as well as other former territories under mandate cannot be left suspended after the liquidation of the League of Nations. There are but two possible legal ways of determining their fate; either by granting the true independence to this or that territory, or by transforming it into a trust territory. From the point of view of the principles of the charter, there is no third way.

In the sense that Mr. Novikov's statement is a protest against needless delay, it is quite in accord with the assembly resolution of February 9th, 1946. To that extent, too, it may operate to the Zionist advantage. But Mr. Novikov may also have been serving notice that the USSR will subject to searching inquiry not only proposals for a possible Palestinian trusteeship, but also any definition which could satisfy his government on what is 'true independence'.

The phrase 'true independence', with the word 'true' underscored, should be pondered in the event of a Jewish Palestine applying for membership in the United Nations. There is the strategic aspect of things. On November 11, Premier Ismail Sidqi Pasha of Egypt, fresh from the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations, revealed that while the centre of gravity for Britain in the Middle East is shifting from the Mediterranean to East Africa, construction of new barracks across the border from Egypt indicates that Britain still means to treat Palestine as a feature of her world-wide strategic system. So far as the United Nations is concerned, the new Jewish Palestine may yet find itself in the same boat as Transjordan. If Transjordan were not a military dependency of Britain, the adverse note against her by Russia, a slight echo of which resounded in Mr. Novikov's speech, might have not occurred. So, too, in the event of partition, there would be little enthusiasm in Moscow if British ascendancy prevailed over what may otherwise be an internationalized Jerusalem area. *A fortiori* how much less happy will they be about an Anglo-Jewish agreement for British naval bases, air facilities, or military cooperation on land: The age of secret treaties is supposed to have passed. Yet some understanding about future eventualities rather than hard and fast stipulations, signed, sealed and delivered, may therefore be necessary during the initial state of Jewish independence, if the Russian stumbling block is to be surmounted.

It should, however, be remembered that Transjordan, while part of a mandated area, achieved what is at any rate the semblance of sovereignty and no international obstacle barred her way. Nor does reluctance to admit her to the United Nations or the fact of non-recognition by a power such as Russia present her with an unprecedented state of affairs. Other powers have been withdrawn from the League of Nations as well as the United Nations, or have gone without recognition for considerable periods by other powers. On the Transjordan model there may, therefore, be a better chance of getting a workable answer to the problem of Jewish political independence, even though it be outside the United Nations sphere rather than within it. At any

rate, the effective disapprobation of Russia and even the direct voting interference of an Arab bloc might thus be circumvented. It is true that the future Jewish state's admission to the United Nations would be rendered more difficult to obtain. If the Russians prove adamant, it might have to be postponed indefinitely. This, while regrettable, would not be fatal. First things come first.

[...][3]

Lionel Gelber

70
Report of J. Robinson at a Meeting of the American Zionist Emergency Council (New York, 19 November 1946)[1]

MINUTES: ISA 93.03/2268/16

Dr. Robinson: During the last few weeks three important developments can be registered throwing new light on the Soviet attitude. First of all is the famous statement of policy of the Communist Party in the United States of America in regard to its work among Jewish masses.[2] This is a ten-to-fifteen-thousand-word statement outlining the new line of the policy of the Communist Party in regard to Jewish problems and especially in regard to Palestine. It is frankly admitted that whatever has been done so far was an error and that from now on the policy to be followed is first, Arab–Jewish understanding, and then – if they reach an agreement about immigration – immigration can follow. There is a certain inconsistency in presenting the case, on the one hand, for an independent Palestine and, on the other hand, [for] a Big Three trusteeship of Palestine and it is difficult to know what is the final decision because there are two statements in the same paragraph. The so-called slogan of a Jewish national home is bitterly attacked. The idea of a 'world Jewish nation' is ridiculed. 'Palestine is completely absent from any future Jewish cultural

Doc. 69

3. The last part of the document, dealing with the views of Sumner Welles on the Palestine question, has been omitted.

Doc. 70

1. This document is composed of excerpts from stenographic minutes of a general discussion. Some measure of editing was necessary owing to garbled and obscure passages, and in some cases faulty grammar. Editorial deletions and changes are marked with square brackets. Deletions in the original (mainly proper names which had been misunderstood by the stenographist or typist) are in parentheses.
2. The article referred to is the resolution published 4 November 1946 in the Yiddish communist paper *Morgn freyheyt,* which was entitled 'Communist Work among the American Jewish Masses'. The apparent aim of the statement was to make the line of the American Communist Party conform to the interests of Stalin's foreign policy in the Middle East. It called for British withdrawal from Palestine and the establishment there of an independent state

interest.' Some references can be found to so-called democratic Zionists, which would probably mean communists. The leadership of the American Zionist Organization is bitterly attacked.

The second, also very important, new development is the attitude of Yiddish writers and artists in the Soviet Union in regard to Jewish problems. It is common knowledge that in the beginning of September a general attack was begun on Russian literature and drama. Curiously enough [the] famous report of (--) [Zhdanov] on the deviation of Soviet writers does not mention Yiddish writers.[3] Among its representatives the report mentions only (--). This notwithstanding, the Jewish writers convened the next day in Moscow to do something about (--) support. [...]. One writer said: 'There is too much stress laid on the Jewish disaster and not sufficient place given to Jewish heroism and – most important – there is no exposing of international reactionary Jewry and neglect of the problems of the new Soviet Five Year Plan.' A general [campaign?] was also conducted against the whole Yiddish theatre in Russia today always under the same pretext: 'They are idealizing the past, they are becoming centres for [obscurantism?] and Jewish drama itself has a future which must integrate itself into the Five Year Plan.' Most humiliating of all these features is the suddenly discovered love of Ukrainians and White Russians for the Jewish people during the Nazi occupation, which for the last four years were depicted by the Soviet press as being anti-Jewish – that the Ukrainians actually allied themselves with the Germans against the Jews. This has been exposed as being counter-revolutionary, but a writer of an article about David Berg[el]son suddenly said that he was unfair to Ukrainians and, indeed, in the next issue of [*Eynikeyt*] there was a short story about the virtues of the Ukrainian people. Separation of Soviet Jewry from world Jewry has been decreed definitely. All other Jews are finally stigmatized as being reactionary.

The last important factor is the Soviet attitude in the United Nations, especially now, after the statement of last week[4] which leaves no doubt about Soviet policy to be followed there. I am sorry that Jewish journalists are not sufficiently aware that he [Novikov] was right in his legal approach which was, in my opinion, a great mistake too, because the legal approach according to the charter was that there are only two solutions to the mandate: either trusteeship or true independence, meaning not fake independence, for fake independence means the independence of Transjordan. The charter does not establish any general succession from the League [of Nations] to the United Nations, nor did the charter establish these two methods by conferring upon the mandatory power absolute power, because it may not submit a trusteeship agreement but certainly has recognized the great importance and the great

3. Reference is apparently to the campaign initiated by Andrei Zhdanov beginning in September 1946 and directed toward ideological control of literary and artistic life in the Soviet Union.
4. See Doc. 69.

power which the mandatory power will have in determining the future of any country. The Yiddish newspapers said in this respect: 'True, but Palestine should become a, so-to-say, democratic Jewish state.' Anyway, here we are with our old problems and we see that all three elements are somehow integrating: Russia on the one hand, the remnants of Judaism [in] the USSR on the second and the communist party all around the world. Indeed there are only minor deviations, due mostly to the ignorance exhibited in this article [in] *Political Affairs*. It does not pay to register all the mistakes, but I think I would like to say something about them.

Mr. Lourie: Do you think they are unconscious errors or intentional?

Dr. Robinson: No, out of sheer ignorance. If we come now to our basic problem, the problem of what should happen, I certainly do not profess to possess any prescription on how to deal with the Soviets in order to win them over. Neither Byrnes nor Bevin has such a prescription. Nobody has such a prescription, because it is very difficult. But I believe that if there still exists a trace of Jewish political feeling, one question should be asked. Since 1941, if not earlier, a new period started casually in our relationship with the USSR. We casually started appeasing, glorifying – against our better knowledge – passing silently over the most horrible things that were going on, even during the war, and if I may say so, there was a justification for this as long as the war was going on. Victory against Nazi Germany was the overall consideration and I believe Jews were wise when they abstained from any derogatory remarks or from [supplying] any real information, true information on what was happening in the USSR, both in regard to the Soviet Jews and especially with regard to the so-called refugees. But now 18 months have passed. Therefore there is one thing that is imperative, and that is a change. Now we are starting to discuss the change in our policy. I believe we have to make it clear to ourselves and that is based on three assumptions. The first assumption is that the Jews are still a political factor in the world and especially in the US. We make life for Lord Inverchapel[5] very bitter here, and he feels that if the Jews could have been converted to a pro-British feeling it would have been a great thing for him. Now, first, we have to agree on the fact that we have strength, whatever it may be. We should consider that a Great Power such as America today, the democratic country where foreign policy is also being made by democratic procedures, should take an interest in such a group of 5,200,000 Jews. Now, if we accept that fact then the next thing would be real satisfaction on the part of the Soviet Union that the Jews are not in their pocket. They believe that they are, and in fact I do not know how carefully people here in this country read newspapers. In the *Herald Tribune* of March 23, 1946, you could read a report on the Churchill pickets. Not a single non-Jewish name among all these boys and girls. A second example is in the famous report of the Royal Commission when the Royal Commission found it necessary to

5. Lord Inverchapel, British ambassador to the United States, 1946–48.

discuss the problem, why there is such a disproportionate number of Jews among these people, and they say that factor which appears to have played a part in first attracting at least one of the Canadians was that he could fight against the social (--), and then he quotes the questions and answers of Gerson. Now I made a kind of summary of the proportion of Jews and non-Jews and the summary is terrifying. Now if you start with the (--) people he was the organizer of the Communist Party. He fled, and then came Fred Rose, or Rosenberg, son of a Polish Jew. He himself was an immigrant, he was the organizer of the Communist Party, and what is even more distressing, elected by a Jewish constituency and is now in jail. Then the very go-between from (--) organization, who was the head of the espionage, unfortunately an old friend of mine, one of the best Jewish families. Now with these documents in hand I believe that Mr. N[--] is satisfied. He knows that in Canada Jews were helping him, here they are helping him.

[...]

Now I come to the third assumption. If we are still a force, if we have to be won over, what are the methods? It seems to me that the first method, which will be a long-range prospect, would be to destroy these beliefs in the Soviet embassy here and have the whole front organization in the Jewish faithfulness to the Soviet Union. I believe this document will not remain without reaction. I understand that the American Jewish Congress has been pushed to such a position that they will come out too with a statement next Friday and I believe that that will be followed with a very clear attitude by our Jewish organizations. The expression of the so-called formula of Churchill, the Iron Curtain, indeed means what it says. The most educated Jews in this country have not the slightest idea of what is happening in the Soviet country. Every one prefers to leave the ideals buried. I believe that one of the things to be done by every Jewish publication here is to begin each issue with information about what is happening in the Soviet Union: we have to start a process of continuous information. It must be in a detached, dispassionate manner, [just] to tell what is happening, and I am satisfied that after six months of such weekly or bi-weekly or monthly reports, American Jews will start thinking about the Soviet Union [differently]. But this information is not enough. I believe the time has come to start a process of destruction of legends. Why are American Jews so infatuated [with the Soviets]? Why do the majority of Jews believe that the Soviet Union has solved the Jewish problem? Because they believe in five legends and legend number one is that antisemitism is outlawed in the Soviet Union. That is a lie. Never was it outlawed in the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has a general formulation against incitement; in fact, as Lehman formulated it back in 1920, I understand that it must be by coercion and persuasion, and in fact in 1928 there was a great literature of propaganda against antisemitism, but what no American Jew wants to know is that since 1928, not a single pamphlet was published [against antisemitism] and the greatest outburst of antisemitism was at the beginning of

the Five Year Plan.[6] Then there were tremendous clashes, with bloodshed, dead and wounded and so on. But nothing happened. Now the majority of Russia has been living for years under the Nazi regime [and has been] completely poisoned by it. What is happening now is that there is not a single article against antisemitism. What is being done – nothing! There are no trials. In 1928 you could read of trials, but since '28 not a single one and even now, after the war; this must be exposed. We cannot go on continuing saying everywhere that the Soviet Union outlawed antisemitism. In fact, antisemitism today is *a la Grande [mode].* Since 1926 more Jews were purged by (--) in Moscow than at any time in American [*sic*] history. But certainly nobody knows about it. Nobody wants to know about it. That is the first legend.

The second legend is that the Soviet Union has a flourishing [Yiddish] culture. After 29 years there is probably not a single Yiddish (--), the Jews did not want a Yiddish school. Conscious Jews avoided them. They preferred Russian and Ukrainian schools. But after 29 years of flourishing culture all you have today is this newspaper (--).[7] A Jewish population of 2,000,000 without a single daily. With a yearly production of books dealing with Jewish affairs that hardly exceeds 20, while all the others are nothing but translations of the Communist Party and all this kind of stuff which has nothing to do with Jews and Judaism.

There is a third legend, the legend of Birobidzhan,[8] [which actually] is nothing but a kind of a forepost of strategic importance for fighting the Far East. In fact it has a tremendously decreasing Jewish population. They are looking for people and inviting people to come – and people do not want to come. It is again being played up among the anti-Zionist population.

Another legend is that the Soviet Union has rescued 5,000,000 Jews. In fact not a single one. The truth is that out of the 2,000,000 Jews who lived in the Ukraine and White Russia, only two to three hundred thousand were rescued and the remainder was destroyed by the Nazis. Only 400,000 were evacuated, but 1,600,000 remained where they were destroyed. Now we are told that they rescued so many Jews by evacuating so many Jews from Poland, which is only partly true. But it is probably the only case in modern Jewish history that a country which pretends to be so friendly to Jews is the most dangerous. If indeed, as we are told, that that is the paradise for the Jews, then why did they leave?

Then we have a fourth [i.e., fifth] legend that they have done something for world Jewry. In fact when the problem of refugees came up we went in a special mission to try to get some help from them, and the only country that did not accept refugees after 1923 was the Soviet Union. They did accept a

---

6. The first Five-Year Plan in the Soviet Union was introduced in October 1928. It was the first in a succession of plans that revolutionized Soviet industry and agriculture in the direction of state control and collectivism.
7. Reference is apparently to *Eynikeyt*, the official organ of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.
8. See Doc. 3, n. 7.

number of communists, and so I am not going to continue, but what I want to say is that we are believing here in this country under this impact of an accumulated number of legends and nobody dares, so far, to come out with the truth and say: that is not the truth and that is not true and this is not true. I believe that a great campaign of enlightenment must start. We must see what is happening in the Soviet Union. A man who is certainly competent to discuss this matter is Will Grant and he asked me what I think about it. So I told him he was a great humanitarian. In one generation you lose a [--] three million Jews. It is a policy aimed at cutting off of the Jews from the rest of the world, at creating a new Jewish nation, which started in 1917. Well, these are things which should somehow go out to the Jewish reader.

Mrs. Poole: Do you put into this category the activity of Russian War Relief?[9]

Dr. Robinson: I certainly do. It is absolutely unjustified. During the war, all right. We had a common enemy. The infiltration of communists everywhere is something else. We cannot continue going on this way. The moment it will be realized in the world that we know what is happening, that Jewish public opinion is not even for it, they will come to the conclusion that the American Jews must be won over and he will start thinking in other terms than today. In this connection I would like to just throw out an idea. A year from now we are going to have a 30th anniversary,[10] a very fitting opportunity to make a balance of our [achievements and we] should [try] and to see what we won and what we lost during these 30 years, not only in the Soviet Union but all around the world and for myself I am satisfied with the result, but it is important that [by that] time every intelligent and educated Jew should have on his desk a book telling him what has happened during these 30 years.

Now I come to a number of questions. Who shall do this job? I do not believe that it would be wise that only Zionist groups should do it. It is for American Jewry as a whole and there will be a real separation of spirits. We will see who are looking at Moscow and who are looking at New York and Jerusalem as a centre of their loyalty. There is some concerted effort which must be made on all Jewish organizations to start working on this project and I believe it is important. You cannot but be struck by the complete lack of political education when you have a Jewish newspaper in your hands. Poland with its remnant of some 80,000 Jews is still dealt with in very great detail, but the Soviet Union with 2,000,000 Jews is being ignored. Poland, which is no factor in the Palestine problem, but the Soviet Union – taboo, not a single word. That is certainly something which all Jewish organizations and, indeed, all the Jewish communities in America must start doing something about. I believe we should start with [a] number of research projects. It would be a very easy job for me to outline. It is, indeed, maybe the greatest [moment] in Jewish

9. The Jewish Council for Russian War Relief, established during the war, collected and sent to the Soviet Union relief money, medicines and other supplies. The sum pledged for 1946 was $3,000,000.
10. Of the Balfour Declaration.

history. You cannot compare it with [the] Alexandrian[11] period or even with the period of emancipation in Western Europe. As compared with these parallel examples of Jewish realization, it stands out by the number of people [involved] and those who believe that Judaism should survive should make up their minds whether this experiment is going to be repeated and what we have to do about it. That will go on in Yugoslavia. You have 400,000 Jews in Romania you have some 650,000 behind the Iron Curtain, and this today, when we are so poor, [when] all active Judaism is 9,000,000. Now I can imagine that some souls will tell us that we cannot declare war on the USSR, that we cannot create a new enemy. We are not creating it, it is here, it is only for us to realize [that]. We are not going to declare war, nor are we going to use these sensational methods. A method of slow, systematic, but very detached dispassionate real information, real knowledge for us to disseminate, and I certainly cannot believe that the Soviet Union would be [in]different [to] public opinion. Certainly, we cannot declare war on them as we did on England, but in England you can always find a Crossman[12] who will stand up in Parliament and say a few words for you. In the Soviet Union you will find nothing like that, but behind the scenes, if the people are satisfied that the Jews do not belong to them by their very nature, they are not going to do anything about it.

I am very doubtful as to whether under conditions as they stand today neutrality is possible. In fact we tried and we failed. In fact we went to Paris to be neutral.[13] It did not help. All the organizations were there and tried to get something. One of our principles was to be neutral and not to take sides in the fight between East and West, but all the Jewish proposals which were brought in by England and America were voted against 16 to 6. The Soviet bloc voted against anything which had to do with the Jewish problem. We try to be neutral here with the [UN] organization. It does not help us. We cannot be neutral. The world is divided. Well, except Yugoslavia [which] made a certain resolution and the Poles made reservations, but [in the] USSR they are absolutely definitely within the same camp as all the Arab states, and they do not realize that they are not only fighting against their enemies, but they are also at the same time fighting against any possibility of the solution of the Jewish problem. So they are aware of this fact and they are not such fools as not to be aware that these facts are not in favour of Jews, but they believe that the Jews are their friends. Well, this is the essence of what I wanted to say in

---

11. Jewish life and culture flourished in Alexandria in the second and first centuries BCE, but the Jewish population suffered and declined after the Romans took power and particularly after the Jewish revolt in Palestine, which began in 66 AD.
12. Richard Crossman, Labour MP, member of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry, who became an ardent pro-Zionist in the course of the committee's investigations.
13. Reference is apparently to Jewish failure to influence the proceedings of the Paris Peace Conference (beginning in July 1946) which, engaged in preparing and drafting the peace treaties with various Axis countries in Europe, shelved all attempts to safeguard Jewish minority rights, in spite of lobbying by Jewish representatives, headed by the American Jewish Committee.

larger detail here today, but I believe it would be enough as a basic document for a renewal of all our thinking on a matter which we will have [in] from five to ten years completely isolated from reality.

Mr. Gelber: Just a few little comments, which occurred to me. On the question of refugees coming out of Russia at the moment. I found in my discussions with British officials here in the United Nations and in Washington, particularly since summer [that] they have, of course, taken the line that this immigration was deliberately stimulated by the Russians to embarrass Britain. They got through the Russian zone easily and were brought in. That would be one of the arguments that would be brought up against it. I naturally argued back, because people do not flee across half a continent unless there is something pursuing them. I am referring to crossing the Mediterranean.

Dr. Robinson: People are confused. They ask why the Russians push aside the Iron Curtain and let out one hundred and fifty thousand Jews. There is an explanation, a solid explanation. These 150,000 Jews in the Soviet Union presented a problem. Either they keep them and they will have an enemy who will be a source of trouble on [their] hands, or they let them out and have 150,000 propagandists against the Soviet Union, and they weighed these two evils.

Mr. Gelber: I thought I would tell you of the reaction. I also said to them that perhaps the Russians are letting them out to embarrass us, but the fact remains there is this tremendous need. I rather expected you to express this, that one of the reasons why you get this crystallisation of pro-Russian sentiment is the Zionist thing. The notion that the Jews are against Britain seems to shove them into the Russian camp. I detected this at a dinner party of Ruth Gruber.[14] If you are critical of Russia, you are an appeaser of Britain. They do not think that perhaps you have been independent of both groups. You take sides in that sense. I think that is a very important factor among the great masses of American Jewry, who are full of good will. Their natural reaction is: Britain is against us, and you must take that into account in forming a policy.

[...]

14. US journalist, foreign reporter of the *New York Post*, covered the Palestine conflict.

71
D.S. Solod to I.V. Samylovskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.2, D.8, LL.15–26
Beirut, 17 December 1946[1]
Secret

To the Director of the Near East Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Comrade I.V. Samylovskii,

On the present position with regard to the solution of the Palestine problem

I enclose some papers dealing with developments in the search for a solution to the Palestine problem in the past two months.

In the time that has passed since the London Round Table Conference on Palestine ended,[2] the main events have been as follows:

1. The letter sent by US President Truman on 4 October to British Prime Minister Attlee on the most desirable course to adopt regarding the Palestine question,[3] and the reaction to this letter.

2. The Zionist organizations' definition of their attitude to the solution of the Palestine problem, as it has evolved.

3. President Truman's response on 30 October[4] to the letter from the King of Saudi Arabia, Ibn Saud.[5]

4. The statement of the mufti of Jerusalem Hajj Amin al-Husayni about his attitude towards Great Britain in regard to the Palestine question.

5. The speech made by Soviet delegate Comrade Novikov in the UN General Assembly's Committee No. 4 on trusteeship matters.[6]

---

1. The date given here is that of the composition of this document in Beirut and appears at the bottom. At the top, a different date appears – 19 Feb. 1947. The registration stamp of the Middle East Department in Moscow testifies to the fact that the document was received on 4 March 1947.
2. See Doc. 67, n. 3.
3. This letter, actually dated 3 October, includes the message the president was about to release the following day on the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur. The decisive paragraph reads as follows: 'The British government presented to the conference the so-called Morrison plan for provincial autonomy and stated that the conference was open to other proposals. Meanwhile, the Jewish Agency proposed a solution of the Palestine problem by means of the creation of a viable Jewish state in control of its own immigration and economic policies in an adequate area of Palestine instead of in the whole of Palestine. It proposed furthermore the immediate issuance of certificates for 100,000 Jewish immigrants. This proposal received widespread attention in the United States, both in the press and in public forums. From the discussion which has ensued it is my belief that a solution along these lines would command the support of public opinion in the United States. I cannot believe that the gap between the proposals which have been put forward is too great to be bridged by men of reason and goodwill. To such a solution our government could give its support' (see *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. VII, p. 703).
4. Truman's letter was in fact dated 25 October 1946 (see *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. VII, pp. 714–17).
5. See *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. VIII, p. 698. See also Doc. 56, n. 3.
6. See Doc. 69 and n. 1 there.

All these developments in the course of solving the Palestine problem merit our close attention, since they reveal the nature of ideas for a solution of the problem and of the whole Middle Eastern problem as well. Signs are already emerging which suggest that the Middle East is entering a decisive phase, and that the British are renewing their special efforts to improve their position and, if possible, to stabilize the present situation.

American policy in matters concerning the Middle East can be defined as follows:

a) to allow the British to arrange their own affairs as they choose;

b) to act in parallel with the British, so far as possible, and to seize control of all the most important leading economic positions in the Arab countries;

c) to ensure for themselves regular air access, well equipped with aerodromes and landing strips, and based on the so-called fifth freedom of the air,[7] and

d) to ensure that the Arabian oil pipeline reaches the eastern Mediterranean coast at a point which would be the cheapest possible for building and development, strategically a convenient supply base for ships, and finally, free from direct British influence.

President Truman evidently reflects the view of those Americans who still consider that, of all the states of the Middle East, it is Palestine which most nearly satisfies the conditions mentioned above. Apart from anything else it would be easier to get a foothold there without any formal violation of independence or sovereignty, since Palestine is under British Mandate. Therefore it would be quite easy to seize it in the guise of transfer to UN trusteeship, especially by supporting increased Jewish immigration.

Taking these questions in turn, we should note:

1. Truman's letter of 4 October quite clearly reflects these American intentions. In this letter, for instance, he explicitly says: 'I cannot believe that the gap between the proposals which have been put forward is too great to be bridged by men of reason and goodwill. Our government could give its support to such a solution.'

Together with his emphatic recommendation of the immediate 'substantial immigration' of Jews, the president expressed his willingness to give economic aid to Palestine.

Naturally, the British reacted sharply against these plans, which would have given the American imperialists a fine excuse to tear from their grasp in broad daylight such an important titbit as Palestine. In inviting the Americans to take

7. Annexed to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation signed on 7 December, 1944, were two agreements: the International Air Services Transit Agreement, also known as the Two-Freedoms Agreement, which stipulated rights to passage (transit) without landing and landing (stops) for non-traffic (technical) purposes; and the International Air Transport Agreement, also known as the Five Freedoms Agreement. In addition to the two above-mentioned freedoms, the latter stipulated three commercial freedoms — to discharge passengers and freight in a foreign country, to take them on from a foreign country, and to transport them from one country to another. The reference here is most likely to the *five freedoms of the air* rather than the *fifth freedom*.

part in the solution of the Palestine problem, the British foresaw only American support for their own actions, and not the satisfaction of American ambitions. The British newspaper *Daily Mail*, commenting on Truman's statement, unambiguously indicated where the expected American support would lead: 'President Truman offers immediate aid providing that it is accompanied by a substantial immigration of Jews to Palestine. If this aid involves the despatch of two American divisions to Palestine, then his intervention makes very good sense.' The newspaper adds, with evident dismay: 'Unfortunately, in our view, this is not what he meant.' Therefore the paper calls Truman's statement 'strange' and 'capable of having very unfortunate results', since Jewish terrorists may take it as a 'direct encouragement of their terrorist activities'.

In the Arab world Truman's statement aroused sharp criticism and appeals not only for verbal protests, but also for a boycott of American goods, and the rupture of economic and cultural relations with the US. These 'courageous' and vehement protests were made with the obvious encouragement of the British who, apart from anything else, wanted to stir up conflict between the Arabs and the Americans. This would compel the Americans to abandon their intention of carrying out an independent policy in the Arab countries, and most of all, of giving the British military assistance. However, according to all the evidence, the British have miscalculated, and Truman has decided to act independently in the affairs of Palestine. The French paper *Le Monde* wrote that 'from now on the United States will carry out its own policy in the Eastern Mediterranean, and is refusing to coordinate its position with that of the Foreign Office, with which it has hitherto held common views on Middle Eastern problems'.

However, Truman's attempt proved to be timid, untimely and unsuccessful. Truman is not distinguished by far-sightedness, nor by a statesman's breadth of view. His actions reflect the habits of a minor civil servant, who is used to counting the change left over in the morning for fear that the cook might have cheated him, but who has happened to land in a high position without losing any of his habits.

As for the Palestine question, Truman put forward the idea of resettling 100,000 displaced European Jews in Palestine. And although this figure represents neither the real number of Jews displaced and left homeless in Europe, nor the capacity of Palestine to absorb such a number of immigrants, and although it has no significance whatsoever, since it would not give the Jews a majority in Palestine, Truman still clung to it right up to the elections to the American [Senate] and the House of Representatives in November 1946.[8]

The British promptly identified the inconsistencies in Truman's letter and, relying on the very severe criticism coming from Arab public opinion and press, behaved rather discourteously towards the president of the United States by refusing even to publish his further pronouncements on the subject.

8. The elections, which took place on 5 November, resulted in a Republican victory, the Democrats losing their majority in both Houses of Congress.

Truman's swan song on the Palestine question can be seen in his letter to King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia, in which he continues to insist on the immediate admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine, and 'is quite unable to understand why Your Majesty seems to feel that this statement contradicts earlier promises and statements made by the government'. And Truman 'doesn't understand' this, although President Roosevelt wrote in his letter to Ibn Saud of 5 April 1945 that 'he was expressing in precise terms our desire that no decision be taken with respect to the basic situation in that country [Palestine] without full consultations with both Arabs and Jews'.[9]

In view of the Arabs' strong protest at President Truman's interference in Palestinian affairs, his failure *vis-à-vis* the British and also, apparently, the fact that the Jewish vote in the US did not save him from defeat in the last elections, Truman decided to refrain from dealing directly with Palestinian affairs and he passed the responsibility on to his secretary of state.

2. Encouraged by Truman's support, the Zionists decided that the time had come for a final definition of their position on the Palestine question and, according to a statement by Assistant Secretary of State Dean Acheson, handed the British and American governments their plan for its solution.[10]

This plan was based on the separation of the Jewish part of Palestine as proposed by the British Royal Commission of 1937; the formation within it of a Jewish state, to which 100,000 Jewish immigrants should be admitted under the protection of the United States Army and Navy; and the conversion of the Jewish Agency into the government of this state.

The Palestine Zionist Council basically supported this plan in its decision of 29 October, and even before that had begun to put it into practice by suddenly organizing twelve kibbutzim (something like cooperative farms) in the desert of southern Palestine.[11]

The Zionist Congress which is to be held in Switzerland[12] will, it seems, make further demands over Palestine, and will coordinate its activity with the policy of the British Labour government.

3. Naturally, the Americans' activities and those of the Zionists, the constant incitement by the British and their unceasing bizarre struggle with the Jewish terrorists in Palestine have aroused increasing discontent in the Arab countries, which at one time nearly turned into clashes between Jews and Arabs in Palestine. However, the more sober elements on both sides quickly managed to put an end to these provocations.

By the way, the British have become so absorbed in the game they are playing with the Jewish terrorists that besides constant raids by the British army in Tel Aviv, and minor raids in all the cities of Palestine, they have

9. See *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. VIII, p. 698.
10. Reference is to the plan mentioned by Truman in his statement of 4 October 1946. See n. 3, above.
11. On 6 October 1946 eleven new settlements were established in the Negev. This was the largest settlement endeavour ever carried out by the *yishuv*.
12. The 22nd World Zionist Congress opened in Basel on 9 December 1946.

cordoned off whole blocks of Jerusalem and Haifa with barbed wire. All this looks so absurd that the Palestinians jokingly call these blocks 'Bevingrads'.

This situation as a whole has meant that the Arabs, too, must define their role in the Palestine question more clearly. Apart from the daily statements and calls for protest by various Arab groups and newspapers, the statement of the mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husayni, is typical. The mufti told an American correspondent that he felt no hostility to Great Britain, and wished to see Palestine living in friendship with all countries, including Great Britain; that the Balfour Declaration was an act of aggression against Palestine; that the Arabs had to defend themselves; and that he fled to Germany during the Second World War because he could find no refuge in any Arab or Muslim country. Finally, his attitude to Great Britain would depend on its policy towards Palestine.

As to the British plan for partition of Palestine, the mufti said that he was against any partition of Palestine which would allow the creation of a Jewish state.

Although the mufti's statement is generally very conciliatory in tone, it nevertheless shows a certain determination on the part of the Palestinian Arabs not to make any concessions over Palestine which would go beyond those made in the Arab plan presented at the London Conference.[13]

4. The British, for their part, also continued to be active with regard to the Palestine question after the London Conference was adjourned. British politicians and papers began to come out with their own opinions and proposals.

In these British statements nothing is clear except their desire to retain complete control of Palestine. Criticizing the actions of the Labour government, Churchill said explicitly in his speech at the Conservative Party conference that 'thanks to Labour's mistakes, the British people has been deprived of the fruits which its struggle and efforts had brought it'.

However, in order not to arouse the concern of public opinion in the Arab states and among the Palestinian Arabs, the British have started spreading all manner of soothing and reassuring rumours, to the extent that, according to the American correspondent Roberts, 'there is in the British Cabinet a more and more palpable tendency to favour the transfer of the British Mandate to the United Nations'. It hardly needs saying that the British government has no such intention, and that it has all been done to camouflage the horse-trading which has begun between Bevin and Byrnes, who used the UN General Assembly in New York to this end.

The plainest confirmation of this was the British press' reception of the speech of Soviet delegate Comrade Novikov in Committee No. 4 on trusteeship affairs.[14]

5. The Soviet delegate's statement on the need either to give Palestine independence or to transfer it to United Nations trusteeship seems to bring to

13. See Doc. 67, n. 3.
14. See Doc. 69.

an end this preparatory period, and to open a new stage in the search for a real solution to the Palestine question.

It can be clearly seen from the enclosed papers on the reaction to Comrade Novikov's speech that Arab public opinion was very favourable to it. The British made every possible effort first to discredit the Soviet delegate's speech, for instance by having Jamal al-Husayni say that 'instead of being subjected to one country, we shall be subjected to fifty capitals, in which the Jews will undoubtedly have more influence than the Arabs'; secondly, to strike fear into the Arabs by such anti-Soviet fabrications as the allegation that Soviet statements say that 'the development of Jewish capitalism would ensure the downfall of the present feudal system and the transition to a bourgeois society, which would then prepare the way for a communist regime'; and thirdly, to have the matter suppressed, so that no more should be heard of the Soviet proposal.

In progressive Arab circles the significance of this statement was understood rather differently. The newspaper *Orient* wrote on 13 November that the Soviet delegate 'expressed an opinion which is that of all independent patriots in Beirut, Baghdad, Damascus, Jerusalem and Cairo'. He said what we have been saying repeatedly for months on end, namely that Britain's attempt to settle the Palestine question by direct negotiations with the United States and representatives of the Arabs and Jews contravenes the principles of the United Nations Charter.

The interest, attention and approval given by Arab public opinion to this statement by the Soviet delegate was such that even a fascist newspaper like the Beirut *al-Hayat* was driven to write: 'We take cognizance of this Russian position without going into the motives which may have prompted it.'

Analyzing the situation in Palestine, the Jaffa newspaper *al-Ittihad* wrote that 'in calling for the independence of Palestine and the formation of a democratic government, the Soviet Union is not acting as an interested party, since it is demanding the same for all colonies, and that is the goal for which it is struggling'. The paper added that 'the Soviet position is prompting the Arab countries to change their attitude to the United Nations and to the Soviet Union, which is one of its main arteries. It may even induce them to alter their position on negotiations...'

Here we may consider that we have come to the end of a particular period in the resolution of the Palestine problem.

This period shows that after the London Round Table Conference on Palestine ceased its work, the British tried to reach a preliminary agreement with the Americans to solve the Palestine question in a way that would allow them to remain, under formally modified conditions, in one part of Palestine, and to leave the other part to the Americans.

Support for the Americans, and also for the British, but without any final agreement, came from the Jewish Zionists, who formulated their demands and plan for a Jewish state in Palestine. Since there are different opinions among

the various factions of the Jewish Zionists, a final definition of their positions was put off until the coming World Zionist Congress in Switzerland. This Congress has just opened, and some general decision may be expected.

Throughout this period the Arabs stuck to their position of support for the plan proposed by the London Conference, that Palestine should gradually be given independence. Although the Arab plan does not exclude the retention of British troops in Palestine, and de facto British rule, it still leaves the British in a state of some legal uncertainty about their presence in Palestine, which they cannot tolerate under present conditions.

A new discussion of Arab positions is now under way at the sessions of the Council of the Arab League in Cairo. There is still no information about which way this search for a new position is going, but to judge by numerous ancillary signs, there is reason to think that the leaders of the Arab states which dominate the league are inclined to make new concessions because of the difficult position of Egypt in the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations.[15]

Minister Solod

Appendix to text: 75 pp.[16]

15. Reference is to the impasse created in the Anglo–Egyptian negotiations over Sudan's right to self-determination.
16. On file.

72
Memorandum by W. Eytan[1]

COPY: CZA S25/5343
[Jerusalem] 25 February 1947

1. I attach an analysis of member states of UNO, arranged from the point of view of our political campaign.
[...]
USSR, Belorussia, Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia.

I discount the first three and am indeed not sure whether their opposition may not be worth having more than their support. The last three normally vote with USSR, but on the Palestine issue there may be some hope of catching them.

(a) I do not believe that Czechoslovakia under Masaryk and Beneš would cast an anti-Zionist vote. But I suggest that a special effort be made in Prague, not to prevent an anti-Zionist vote at the dictation of USSR, but to persuade the Czech government to give us vocal support. This would be worth a special emissary – it should under no circumstances be left to the local Zionists to do.

(b) The special emissary, if he were of sufficiently high rank (member of the [Jewish Agency] Executive), might well continue his journey to Warsaw, particularly as the Polish consul general in Palestine[2] has urged this course. I can hardly believe that the Polish government's vote would be affected by what any emissary of ours might say, but there is a possibility that [Poland][3] would not vote against us in any case. If it abstains from voting, it might at least do so intelligently.

(c) The Yugoslav government is more likely than either of these two other countries to follow the Russian line blindly, and I do not think any special effort on our part would be worthwhile. But their consul in Jerusalem is busily engaged in collecting material, and I think we should do all we can here, and with the Yugoslav representatives in Washington and London, to see that this government at least has all the factual information we can give it.

[...]

W.E.

---

1. Only the introductory sentence and the parts dealing with the USSR and Eastern bloc countries are included here. The document in its entirety is printed in *Political Documents of the Jewish Agency*, Vol. II, No. 77, pp. 233–7.
2. Rafael Loc, consul general of Poland in Palestine.
3. Original has, erroneously, 'Palestine'.

73
M.A. Maksimov and S. Nemchinov to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.07, OP.12A, P.42, D.6, LL.130–3
Moscow, 5 March 1947
Secret

THE PALESTINE QUESTION
(October 1946–February 1947)

The London Conference on Palestine, which opened on 10 September 1946, has ended in failure.[1]

The British government, on the pretext that they needed to study the Arab plan for the state structure of Palestine, postponed the conference first until December 1946, and then again, until 27 January 1947.

The Jews, who did not attend the London conference, rejected both the British and the Arab proposals. They called for free immigration of Jews into Palestine, transferring control of immigration into the hands of the Jewish Agency, and the creation of an independent Jewish state.

On 9 December 1946, the 27th World Zionist Congress opened in Basel and passed a resolution expressing indignation that the British government was continuing the policy elaborated in the 1939 White Paper.

According to this resolution:

1. Palestine must become a Jewish state.
2. It must be open to Jewish immigration.
3. Control of immigration must be handed over to the Jewish Agency.
4. The Jewish Agency must be granted the powers necessary for the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine.

The Congress also decided to forbid Jews to take part in the work of the new London conference on the Palestine question.

The representatives of the Arab states and the Palestinian Arabs agreed to take part in the new London conference, but re-affirmed their determination to champion the idea of creating an independent Arab state in Palestine and to reject any plan to partition the country. On 6 December 1946, US Secretary of State James Byrnes stated that the United States would accept the British invitation to send an observer to the forthcoming conference in London, provided that Jewish leaders also took part in it.

That was the situation which faced the new London conference, which opened on 27 January 1947.

The conference was attended by delegations from the following Arab states: Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan and Saudi Arabia. There was also a delegation of Palestinian Arabs. The British delegation was headed by Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin and Colonial Secretary Arthur Creech-Jones.

1. See Doc. 67, n. 3.

Jewish representatives took no part in the conference's work, but they were in London and held separate talks with Bevin and Creech-Jones.

At the outset of the conference, the head of the Syrian delegation, Fares al-Khuri, said that the Arab plan for the structure of a Palestinian state was the most just since it guaranteed civil and political rights to all citizens of Palestine. 'Therefore', Khuri went on, 'the Arabs cannot take part in the discussion of a plan which envisages the partition of Palestine and the creation of a Jewish state.' Jamal al-Husayni, the leader of the Palestinian Arabs, expressed similar views.

The British government presented the Syrian delegates and the Jewish Agency with a new plan for the state structure of Palestine. This envisaged the creation of two autonomous cantons in Palestine, Jewish and Arab, which would be subject to a central tripartite (Arab–Jewish–British) government, established in Jerusalem. Jerusalem would be divided into three districts: Jewish, Christian and Muslim.

The Arabs would have to guarantee the rights of the Jewish minority living in their canton. The Jewish canton would have to accept the same obligations with respect to the Arab minority. A further 100,000 Jewish immigrants must be admitted to the Jewish canton.

The tripartite government would be of a temporary nature, and would exist for four years, after which a bi-national constituent assembly would be formed, which would draft a constitution for the Palestinian state. Future relations between Great Britain and the Palestinian state would be regulated by agreement. The future Palestinian state would be subject to a five-year trusteeship.

This draft was rejected by both the Arabs and the Jews, although the latter announced that they were ready to discuss with the British government any 'compromise proposal for the creation of a viable Jewish state in the territory of Palestine'.

Judging from Bevin's words (in his speech in the House of Commons on 19 February 1947), the Jewish Agency proposed at the beginning of the conference that the British government continue running the administration according to the mandate on such a basis as would enable the Jews to continue to enlarge the Jewish national home until immigration would give them a numerical majority in Palestine and they could call for the creation of an independent Jewish state in the whole country.

On 14 February 1947, Bevin told the Arab delegates at the conference and the representatives of the Jewish Agency that, since the British government's proposals had been rejected by the Arabs, it had decided to hand the Palestine question over to the United Nations.

The Jewish leaders categorically object to turning the Palestine question over to the Trusteeship Council. They propose that the United Nations prepare a detailed report on the course of events in Palestine, set up a special committee on the Palestine problem, and then pass the conclusions of this committee on to the United Nations for discussion.

The Arab leaders consider that this authoritative international organization will be able to find a correct and just solution of the Palestine problem which will satisfy the age-old yearnings of the Palestinian Arabs.

Speaking on the Palestine question in the House of Commons on 25 February 1947, Bevin stated that 'it is still possible to settle this matter without recourse to the United Nations if the two sides (i.e., Arabs and Jews) abandon their irreconcilable positions'.

In conclusion, we should note, on the one hand, Bevin's and, on the other, Creech-Jones' attitude to the problem of the mandate. Bevin, whose speech was largely demagogic and aimed mainly at placating the Arabs, emphasized that the mandate had outlived its time and was 'in fact impracticable', while Creech-Jones, the colonial secretary, stated bluntly:

'We are not going to the United Nations in order to give up the mandate. We are going to the United Nations in order to raise the issue and to ask for advice on how to implement the mandate, if that can be done in its present form.'

On the basis of this frank statement by the British colonial secretary, it may be concluded that Britain is not about to let go of Palestine, but only that, finding itself in a difficult position, it is looking for new ways of enabling it to go on governing Palestine with the approval of the United Nations.

If Britain hands over the Palestine question to the United Nations, our position must evidently rest on these points:

1. The British Mandate over Palestine must be ended, since it makes a fundamental solution impossible and creates a constant threat to security in the Near East.

2. British troops must be withdrawn from Palestine in order to normalize the situation.

3. The United Nations must prepare the conditions necessary for the creation of a single, independent and democratic Palestine which will ensure that all the peoples living there will enjoy equal national and democratic rights.

4. The Jewish question in Western Europe cannot be resolved by immigration to Palestine, since only the complete eradication of the roots of fascism and the democratization of the countries of Western Europe can give the Jewish masses normal living conditions.[2]

Deputy Director of the Near East Department
M. Maksimov
Attaché of the Near East Department
S. Nemchinov

2. Endorsed by I. Samylovskii on 4 March 1947.

74
B.E. Shtein to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.07, OP.12A, P.42, D.6, LL.134–41
Moscow, 6 March 1947

To Comrade A.Ia. Vyshinskii,

THE PALESTINE QUESTION

[...][1]

2. The British Position

For Great Britain, Palestine has always played the part of strategic cover for the Suez Canal, which, like Egypt, guaranteed free communications with India. As Britain saw more and more clearly that it would have to leave Egypt, so Palestine's position became more important.

In Palestine during World War I, Great Britain decided to rely on the Jews. Balfour's Declaration of 2 November 1917 promised to create a 'Jewish national home' in Palestine. This declaration was included in the mandate given to Britain by the League of Nations in 192[2]. Herbert Samuel, a Jew, was appointed high commissioner. In the first period of British rule in Palestine, they relied mostly on the Zionists, and supported both Jewish immigration into Palestine and capital investment by major Jewish financiers for the development of the economy.

In 1925 this policy underwent a complete turnabout. Influenced by the growth of the Arab national movement in a number of countries in the Middle East, Great Britain decided to put its stake on the Arabs instead of the Jews. Herbert Samuel was recalled, and was replaced by Field Marshal Lord Plumer, whose policy relied on support from the Arab sheikhs. Jewish immigration to Palestine was greatly reduced.

However, this shift in British policy in Palestine did not bring the expected results. The Arabs had no intention of helping the British turn Palestine into a British colony, and continued their struggle for its independence. In the whole period of mandatory government in Palestine there was no cessation either of the Arab struggle for independence, or of the struggle between Arabs and Jews. Since 1937 every single plan put forward by the British government for the solution of the Palestine problem has been based on the continuation of British rule in Palestine. Great Britain tried, and is still trying, to keep in its own hands the role of arbiter between the two conflicting groups (Jews and Arabs).

The British government's decision to hand over the Palestine problem to the United Nations was taken for the following reasons:

1) The stalemate which had been reached in the British government's negotiations with both Arabs and Jews and the impossibility of finding a plan acceptable to both sides.

---

1. The first part of the document, which recounts recent events in Palestine, has been omitted.

2) The understanding that support for the status quo in Palestine by force would require the despatch of substantial armed forces and the expenditure of considerable material resources, which would have been extremely difficult given the present strained state of British finances.
3) The opportunity to transfer Great Britain's main strategic base in the Middle East from Palestine to Transjordan, an operation which was secured by the Anglo-Jordanian treaty of April 1946.
4) Increased pressure from the United States (see below).

Referring the Palestine question to the United Nations did not, of course, mean that Great Britain fully and finally relinquished Palestine and was ready for an immediate withdrawal of its troops. The decision to refer is, in present circumstances, a very adroit diplomatic manoeuvre. Bevin is well aware that a practical solution of the Palestine problem is not something simple which could be quickly achieved by the UN. On the other hand, Great Britain continues to consider itself the mandatory power, from which it follows that no decision on Palestine can be reached without British agreement. The colonial secretary, Creech-Jones, has stated that Great Britain has no intention of giving up the mandate. In this way, by shifting responsibility for the Palestine question onto the United Nations, Great Britain at once maintains its presence and its troops in Palestine. It is gaining time and preserving its position.

3. The United States' Position

The United States' interest in Palestine dates from before World War I. In 1919 President Wilson put forward the idea of a United States Mandate in Palestine. In 1922 the United States Congress adopted a resolution that 'the United States favours the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine'. This American interest in Palestine was determined mainly by two factors: the presence of oil and the role of the Jews in the United States.

US interest in Palestine greatly increased during World War II as a result of the receipt of American concessions to exploit the rich oil deposits of Saudi Arabia and the plan to build an American oil pipeline from Arabia to the Mediterranean and construct oil refineries in Palestine.

Already in Roosevelt's time, the United States expressed disapproval of the British White Paper of 1939 and called for an increase in Jewish immigration. However, during World War II, Roosevelt took a very cautious line on the Palestine question, since he did not wish to antagonize the Arab states.

Under Truman the United States came out decisively in support of Jewish demands for Palestine. In August 1945 Truman asked Britain for permission for 100,000 Jews to enter Palestine. We have already set out the United States' position in the joint Anglo-American Committee. The day following the adjournment of the London Conference on Palestine, on 2 October 1946, Truman sent a message to Prime Minister Attlee in which he said that the United States would not support the plan for partition of Palestine as proposed by the British, since this plan had met opposition from the main political parties in the US.

The United States' support for the Jews in the Palestine question led to a sharp polemic between Great Britain and the United States. In a debate in the House of Commons on 25 February, Bevin referred to the position of the United States and emphasized that Great Britain was the mandatory power and responsible for Palestine. Bevin said further that the publication of Truman's statement on the admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine was the cause of the breakdown of negotiations. Bevin added: 'I cannot solve problems which are the subject of an electoral campaign.' Bevin was basically right, since the United States' position on Palestine, as we have indicated above, depends in good measure on the existence of two million Jewish voters, whose votes are sought by both the Republican and the Democratic parties.

Bevin's speech aroused a sharp reaction in the US. The White House released a statement rejecting the view that 'the American interest in Palestine is to be explained by party politics'.

For the United States, Palestine is, of course, exceptionally important both strategically and economically. To leave Great Britain in power in Palestine would mean British control of the export of oil from Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, possession of Palestine (in one form or another) would give the United States an important stronghold on the Mediterranean where, as we know, the US has no other such bases.

4. A Possible Position for the USSR

The forthcoming discussion of the Palestine question at the UN makes it necessary for the USSR to formulate its position, which it has not yet done.

The USSR must take a decisive stand in favour of the abolition of the British Mandate. As mandatory power, Great Britain has not coped with its task successfully. During the whole period of the mandate, that is, for more than a quarter of a century, Great Britain has not managed to establish order in the country, nor to prevent almost continuous bloodshed. The replacement of the mandate by British trusteeship is out of the question. A different name would change nothing. One might consider a collective trusteeship, either of the United Nations or of a number of states (possibly the permanent members of the Security Council). But the establishment of such a trusteeship in Palestine is countered by the fact that the population of that country (both Jews and Arabs) are mature enough for full independence. Neither Arabs nor Jews will agree to any sort of trusteeship, but will call for full independence.

The Soviet Union cannot do other than support the demand for the full independence of Palestine as a state. The first and essential condition for this independence must be the withdrawal of British troops from the country.

However, giving Palestine independence will not resolve Jewish–Arab antagonism there. The USSR can see no way to solve this problem except by democratic methods. This means that, together with independence, Palestine must get a democratic constitution which would give full and genuinely equal rights (both civil-political and national) to the whole population of Palestine. This constitution must be drawn up by the United Nations, which must then ensure that it is implemented.

Great Britain's referral of the Palestine question to the United Nations offers the USSR its first opportunity not only to express its point of view on the matter, but also to play an effective part in deciding the fate of Palestine.

B. Shtein

75
I.V. Samylovskii to Ia.A. Malik (New York)

COPY: AVP RF, F.018, OP.9, N.17, D.77, L.1
Moscow, 14 March 1947
Top Secret

To Comrade Ia.A. Malik,

I attach a memorandum on the Palestine question.[1]

In connection with Trygve Lie's approaching Comrade Gromyko about the opinion of the Soviet government on the question of setting up a special committee of the United Nations to discuss the Palestine problem, a telegram from Comrade V.M. Molotov to Comrade Gromyko was sent on 6 March, with instructions to accept Trygve Lie's proposal to set up such a committee.

Our position on the Palestine question has been formulated in a report to Comrade A.Ia. Vyshinskii[2] as follows:

1. The British Mandate for Palestine must be annulled, since it is an obstacle to the solution of the Palestine question.
2. British troops must be withdrawn from Palestine in order to create a normal situation.
3. The United Nations must work out a constitution for a single independent democratic Palestine, which ensures that the peoples living there will enjoy equal national and democratic rights.

I.V. Samylovskii

1. Reference is presumably to Doc. 73.
2. The memorandum to Vyshinskii, signed by Shtein, Vinogradov and Samylovskii, and dated 15 March 1947, is filed under AVP RF, f.0118, op.2, p.2, d.8, l.101.

76
I.V. Samylovskii to D.S. Solod (Beirut)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.2, D.8, LL.104–5
Moscow, 26 March 1947
Top Secret

To the USSR minister in Syria and Lebanon, Comrade D.S. Solod,

Although the information contained in your letter of 19 February under reference no. 77/s[1] on the 'Palestine question' is based on data from the last quarter of the previous year, it is nevertheless of interest to the department. In particular there are interesting translations of certain documents which were enclosed with the letter but which were not to be found in the departmental files.

Your characterization of the essence of American policy towards Palestine is basically the same as the material on the Palestine question which we have here. So is your assessment of the position of Great Britain, which has no intention of letting Palestine go, but is looking only for a solution to the Palestine question which would allow it to keep its own domination there for a longer period.

However, we have the following comments on some of the statements in the letter.

Your conclusion that Truman's efforts to 'carry out his own policy in the Eastern Mediterranean have proved to be timid, ill-timed and unsuccessful..'. (p. 5), is plainly at variance with the facts. The United States in reality has interfered and continues to interfere actively and openly in almost everything that goes on in the Middle East countries (by seizing oil resources, building airlines, supplying Middle East countries with military goods, sending advisors, granting credits, etc.).

Nor can we agree with you that Truman has given up direct handling of matters concerned with the Palestine question, or that his letter to Ibn Saud can be considered his last intervention in Palestine affairs (p. 6).

We do not yet have data which would confirm this conclusion.

It is also hard to agree with the conclusion that Palestine is unable to 'absorb a meaningful number of immigrants'.

In spite of these comments, your letter, which is accompanied by well-chosen translations from the local press, will serve as material for the department's further work on the 'Palestine question'.

Director of the Near East Department
USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs
I.V. Samylovskii

1. Doc. 71.

77
Memorandum by M.A. Maksimov

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.2, D.8, LL.107–9
Moscow, 12 April 1947
Secret

A POSSIBLE POSITION FOR THE USSR IN DISCUSSION OF THE PALESTINE QUESTION AT THE UNITED NATIONS

The USSR's position on the Palestine question can be formulated briefly in the following propositions:
1. The British Mandate must be annulled.
2. British troops must be withdrawn from Palestine.
3. The United Nations must work out a constitution for a single independent democratic Palestine, which will ensure that the peoples living there enjoy equal national and democratic rights.
4. The Jewish question in Western Europe cannot be solved only by immigration to Palestine, since nothing short of the complete destruction of all the roots of fascism and the democratization of the countries of Western Europe will give the Jewish masses normal conditions of life.

I. The British Mandate for Palestine must be annulled, since it is an insuperable and fundamental obstacle to a basic solution of the Palestine problem.

When the British government accepted the mandate for Palestine in 1922, it undertook the obligation to promote the development of the country towards the achievement of local self-government and local autonomy. The mandate gave Great Britain complete legislative and administrative rights in Palestine, including control of foreign relations and the judicial system. Britain also obtained the right to station its troops in Palestine. The absolute ruler of the country is the British high commissioner, who enjoys total legislative and executive power.

In spite of this, Britain, which has ruled Palestine for almost a quarter of a century, with all the considerable powers mentioned above, and an enormous state and military apparatus, has failed in the task of mandatory power and has been unable to establish order in the country or to prevent almost continuous bloodshed. This creates a threat to security in the Near East.

II. British troops must be withdrawn from Palestine in order to create a normal situation there. The urgent withdrawal of British troops must be carried out in order to create a situation which would make it possible to prepare conditions for the organization of self-government in Palestine, since the presence of British troops in Palestine creates disturbances and sedition not only in Palestine itself, but also in neighbouring countries as well. Palestine, which has

one of the main concentrations of British troops in the Near East, is included by Britain in its general plan for military measures in this part of the world, which are intended to create a military bridgehead. This is not only unnecessary at present, but threatens to cause trouble for all the countries of the Near East.

III. We must support the demands of progressive groups for the creation of a single, independent and democratic Palestine, which will ensure that all the peoples living there will enjoy equal national and democratic rights.

The United Nations must produce, within a fixed period, conditions for the creation of an independent, democratic Palestinian state, and together with representatives of the population of Palestine draw up a constitution for that state. The United Nations must also act as guarantor for the implementation of the conditions which it has drawn up.

The independent and democratic Palestinian state will be a member of the United Nations.

IV. Attempts to solve the Jewish question in the states of Western Europe only by Jewish immigration to Palestine are doomed to failure, since nothing short of the complete destruction of all the roots of fascism and the full democratization of the countries of Western Europe can give the Jewish masses normal conditions of life in any country.

V. Any attempts by a single state to get rights from the United Nations to a protectorate over Palestine cannot be accepted. Without doubt, Britain, claiming the right to retain the mandate or to be given trusteeship, will pursue the same policy in Palestine as under the mandate.

It would be more fruitful to discuss the establishment of a collective protectorate under the auspices of the United Nations, although in this case, too, it must be remembered that the population of the country (both Arabs and Jews) is mature enough to be given full independence, that both are opposed in principle to a protectorate, and that Jews and Arabs call for full independence and the creation of, respectively, a Jewish or an Arab state.

M. Maksimov[1]

1. Handwritten note at the top of the first page: 'Sent to Comrade Malik by the 10th Section on 12 April 1947.' The 10th Section was in charge of transmitting cipher messages.

78
Memorandum by the Middle East Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs[1]

COPY: AVP RF, F.018, OP.9, P.17, D.77, LL.6–11
Moscow, 15 April 1947
Secret

THE POSITIONS OF THE US, BRITAIN, THE ARABS AND THE ZIONISTS ON THE PALESTINE QUESTION
(For the forthcoming discussion of the Palestine question at the United Nations)

I. *The United States' Position*

The most recent version of the official position of the United States is to be found in Truman's statement of 3 October 1946. Truman said that public opinion in the United States would support the proposal to create a viable Jewish state, in control of its own immigration and economic policy in an appropriate part of Palestine – but not the whole of Palestine – and the immediate admission of 100,000 Jewish immigrants, as proposed by the Jewish Agency.

The United States government could support such a solution to the problem.

The interest in Palestine shown by the United States is determined by these circumstances:

1. The seizure of the richest oil resources in the Near East by American cartels and the United States' intention to establish the domination of American capital in Near Eastern markets. The American pipeline will pass through Palestine and American refineries will be built there too.

2. The United States' aim of building air and naval bases in the Near East, particularly in Palestine, in order to establish American domination of the world.

Under Truman the United States came out decisively in support of the Zionists and, with the aim of achieving economic and military supremacy over the countries of the Near East, laid special stress on the creation of a Zionist state in Palestine. Influential American Zionist circles support Truman in this policy. The position of the United States depends partly on the two million Jewish voters in the US, and on American Zionist capitalists.

The US considers that Palestine is an exceptionally important economic and strategic bridgehead on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. This is why there is exceptionally strong support for the Zionists' aim to create a Zionist

1. This document appears to borrow extensively from Shtein's memorandum (see Doc. 74).

state in Palestine, even though it damages the United States' relations with the Arab states.

II. *The British Position*

Britain's position on the Palestine question was recently made clear at the London Conference of January 1947.

The British government proposed a plan to the Arab delegates and to the Jewish Agency which envisaged the creation in Palestine of two autonomous cantons, one Arab and one Jewish, which would be subject to a central tripartite government (Arab–Jewish–British).

The Arabs, in their canton, would have to guarantee the rights of the Jewish minority living on their territory, and the Jewish canton would take on the same obligations with regard to the Arab minority. One hundred thousand new Jewish immigrants would be admitted to the Jewish canton.

The tripartite government would exist in Palestine for four years, after which a bi-national constituent assembly would be formed to work out a constitution for the Palestinian state. The Palestine state would be subject to trusteeship for five years. Relations between Great Britain and the Palestine state would be regulated by treaty.

This position was rejected by both Arabs and Jews. Britain then referred the issue to the United Nations, taking the view that Britain, as the mandatory state, could not solve the problem of establishing a Jewish state in Palestine (as the Zionists and the United States insist) or an Arab state (as the Arabs insist).

In his statement of 25 February 1947 on this matter, Bevin argued that the British government, 'as the mandatory power, is not authorized to take such a decision'.

For Britain, Palestine plays the role of a strategic bridgehead, guaranteeing sea and air communications with India. The British pipeline carrying oil from Iraq terminates in Palestine.

In the first period of their rule in Palestine the British relied mainly on the Zionists, protected Jewish immigration and attracted Jewish capital to Palestine, but in 1925 decided to back the Arabs. Britain was trying to play the part of arbiter between the two sides struggling against each other in Palestine.

Britain's decision to hand the matter over to the United Nations was evidently taken because:

1. Britain was unable to put forward a plan which would be acceptable to both the Arabs and the Jews and would also fully maintain the British position in Palestine.

2. Britain could not shoulder the heavy financial burden which the maintenance of a substantial military and civilian state apparatus in Palestine would entail.

3. There was increasing pressure from the United States, and at the same time joint Anglo-Saxon plans to seize the resources of the Middle and Near East (oil, air bases, military supplies and training of local armies, etc.).

By handing over the Palestine question to the United Nations, Britain continues to see itself as the mandatory power, and to hold, therefore, that any radical solution to the Palestine problem is still impossible without British consent. By referring the Palestine question to the United Nations Britain is trying to gain time while reserving its position with regard to the peoples of Palestine.

III. *The Arab States' Position*

The Arab states' proposals on the Palestine question were set out in a memorandum which the leader of the Syrian delegation handed to members of the United Nations on 21 November 1946.[2] The proposals consisted of a number of points, of which the following were fundamental:

1. The high commissioner of Palestine is to appoint a provisional government of Palestine, to which he will hand over all executive and legislative power, but the high commissioner shall retain the right of veto for the period of transition.

2. Elections to a constituent assembly of Palestine are to take place.

3. A democratic constitution should be adopted for Palestine which envisages the election of a legislative body. The high commissioner may not veto the constitution.

4. Jewish immigration must be halted.

5. The mandate will no longer be operative after the appointment of a head of the state of Palestine, but no later than 31 December 1948.

6. A treaty of alliance should be concluded with Britain.

Progressive Arab organizations such as the Arab League of National Liberation[3] are struggling for the independence of Palestine and the annulment of the mandate, for the withdrawal of British troops and for the democratization of the country. The League stands for Arab–Jewish unity in the struggle against imperialism and Zionism.

IV. *The Zionist Position*

The resolution of the Basel Zionist Congress of December 1946 demanded:

a) that Palestine become a Jewish 'commonwealth of nations' and a home for the Jews;

b) that full control of Jewish immigration to Palestine be given to the Jewish Agency.

The Congress rejected the plan for the partition of Palestine into Arab, Jewish and British zones.

The Zionist organizations in Palestine are implacably opposed to the Arabs. Only two organizations, the 'League for Arab–Jewish Cooperation and

---

2. Handed to Gromyko on the same day. For Russian translation, see AVP RF, f.018, op.8, p.7, d.92, l.16.

3. The Arab League of National Liberation was founded in late 1943 in the wake of the break up of the Palestine Communist Party. Although communist in its ideology and parlance, it had certain Arab nationalistic undertones. Most of its members were Christian Arabs. Its most prominent members were Abdallah al-Bandak and Emil Habibi (see also Doc. 15).

Rapprochement'[4] and the Communist Party of Palestine, have come out for the creation of a bi-national Jewish–Arab state based on the full equality of Jews and Arabs, for the complete independence of Palestine and for working out a genuinely democratic constitution for Palestine.

V. *A Possible Position for the USSR in Discussion of the Palestine Question at the United Nations*

The USSR's position in the Palestine question can be formulated briefly in the following points:

1. The British Mandate must be annulled.

The British Mandate for Palestine must be annulled since it is an insuperable and fundamental obstacle to a satisfactory solution of the Palestine problem.

When the British government accepted the mandate for Palestine in 1922, it took on the obligation to promote the development of the state towards the goal of local self-government and local autonomy. The mandate gave Great Britain full legislative and administrative rights in Palestine, including control of foreign policy and the judicial system. Britain also obtained the right to station its troops in Palestine. The absolute ruler of the country is the British high commissioner, who enjoys full legislative and executive power.

In spite of this, Britain, which has ruled Palestine for almost a quarter of a century, with all the wide-ranging powers mentioned above, with an enormous state and military apparatus, has failed in its duty as the mandatory power, and has been unable to establish order in the country or to prevent almost continuous bloodshed. This is a threat to security in the Middle East.

2. British troops must be withdrawn from Palestine.

British troops must be withdrawn from Palestine in order to create a normal situation there. Their immediate withdrawal is necessary in order to create a situation which would make it possible to lay the groundwork for the organization of self-government in Palestine, since the presence of British troops does nothing but create disorder and sedition not only in Palestine itself, but also in neighbouring countries. Palestine, which has one of the main concentrations of British troops in the Near East, is included by Britain in its general plan of British military measures in this part of the world. These are meant to create a military-strategic bridgehead, which is not only superfluous at present but also threatens to make trouble for all the countries of the Near East.

3. The United Nations must draw up a constitution for a single, independent and democratic Palestine which will ensure that all the peoples living there will enjoy equal national and democratic rights.

We must support the demands of progressive social groups for the creation of a single, independent and democratic Palestine, which will ensure that all the peoples living there enjoy equal national and democratic rights.

---

4. See Doc. 15, n. 4.

The United Nations must, within a fixed time period, lay the foundations for the creation of an independent, democratic Palestinian state, and together with representatives of the population of Palestine must draw up a constitution for that state. The United Nations must also act as guarantor for the implementation of its own prerequisites for an independent and democratic Palestine state.

The independent and democratic Palestinian state will be a member of the United Nations.

4. The Jewish question in Western Europe cannot be solved simply by means of immigration to Palestine. Only a complete eradication of all the roots of fascism and the democratization of the countries of Western Europe can ensure the Jewish masses a normal existence.

Attempts to solve the Jewish question in the states of Western Europe only through Jewish immigration to Palestine are doomed to failure, since nothing short of the complete eradication of all the roots of fascism and the full democratization of the countries of Western Europe can give the Jewish masses a normal existence in any country.

* * *

Any attempts by any state to get the right of individual trusteeship over Palestine from the United Nations cannot be accepted. There can be no doubt that Britain, claiming the right to retain the mandate or to be given trusteeship, would continue the same policy in Palestine as under the mandate.

It would be more fruitful to discuss the establishment of a collective protectorate over Palestine under the United Nations, although it should be remembered that the population of the country (both Arabs and Jews) is mature enough to be given full independence, and the creation of, respectively, a Jewish or an Arab state.

79
Memorandum by the Jewish Agency

COPY: ISA 93.03/2268/16
New York, 28 April 1947
Confidential

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Jewish [Agency] Delegation's View of Questions on the Agenda:

1. The special session of the General Assembly, which opened on 28 April, was convened on the initiative of Great Britain, with the agreement of the majority of members of the United Nations, including the permanent members

of the Security Council. At present there is only one point on the agenda: the formation of a special commission to prepare the Palestine question for consideration at the next regular session of the General Assembly, and to draw up terms of reference for the commission.

The Jewish delegation has no objection to this point on the agenda.

2. According to the available information, the Arab states are proposing the addition of one more point to the agenda: the termination of the British Mandate and the creation of an independent Palestinian state.

The Jewish delegation is against examining the Arab proposal at this session, and therefore opposes any such addition to the agenda. This is merely one way of solving the Palestine problem. The United Nations can make recommendations only after exhaustive study of the problem in all its complexity, and this will take time. In the time between the special and regular sessions, the Special Commission will be in a position to prepare thoroughly considered proposals, which cannot be done at this session.

3. Three sides have a direct interest in the Palestine question: the Jews, the Arabs and Great Britain. Great Britain takes part in the General Assembly; the interests of the Palestinian Arabs are represented by five Arab states; the Jews are absent. It is hard to imagine that the United Nations, acting according to the principles of justice and international law, could disregard these principles in a matter so vital to the Jewish people. The Jewish people is represented in its aspirations for Palestine by the Jewish delegation, which is also the authorized representative of the Jewish people of Palestine (see article 4 of the mandate, which was approved for implementation by article 80 of the United Nations Charter).

The Jewish delegation will demand permission to take part in the work of the Assembly (without voting rights), and hopes for active support from other delegations.

4. As for membership of the Special commission, the Jewish delegation considers Arab participation in it as unacceptable. On the other hand, both the Jewish people and the Arab population of Palestine must be given every possible opportunity to appear before the commission and to present their views and wishes both in writing and orally.

5. The commission's terms of reference should be: 1) to clarify the aims of the Palestine Mandate; 2) to establish to what extent the administration and the mandatory power have fulfilled their international obligations; 3) to recommend solutions in accordance with the spirit and the letter of the mandate, article 80 of the United Nations Charter, the Balfour Declaration and the principles of international law (including the theory of 'properly acquired rights').

The commission must be instructed to leave for Palestine without delay, in order to study the matter on the spot.

80
Memorandum by the Jewish Agency[1]

COPY: ISA 93.03/2268/16
New York, 28 April 1947

SUBJECT: THE BACKGROUND OF THE PALESTINE PROBLEM

The Promise: During World War I, the Allied powers, in determining the future of the vast territories of the Ottoman Empire, gave their approval to Zionist aspirations and agreed to restore Palestine to the Jewish people.

On 2 November 1917, the British government issued the Balfour Declaration pledging 'their best endeavours to facilitate' the 'establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people'.

France and Italy adhered to the declaration early in 1918 and on 3 March 1919, President Wilson, who had previously given his approval, stated 'the Allied nations, with the fullest concurrence of our own government and people, are agreed that in Palestine shall be laid the foundations of a Jewish commonwealth'.

The Mandate: At San Remo, on 25 April 1920, the Allied Supreme Council allotted the mandate for Palestine to Great Britain, for the primary purpose of fulfilling the Balfour pledge. The fifty-one nations of the League of Nations, acting through the League Council, approved the mandate on 24 July 1922.

The mandate recognized 'the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine' as one of the grounds for reconstituting their national home there. Great Britain was enjoined by the mandate to place the country 'under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish national home' and to 'facilitate Jewish immigration' and 'encourage... close settlement by Jews on the land' while 'safeguarding the civil and religious rights of all the inhabitants of Palestine, irrespective of race and religion.'

The promise was made not only to the Jews of Palestine but, as Winston Churchill told the House of Commons in 1939, 'to the Jews outside Palestine, to that vast unhappy mass of scattered, persecuted, wandering Jews whose intense unchanging, unconquerable desire has been for a national home'.

Accordingly, to establish an instrument through which the Jewish people could exercise their rights in Palestine, the mandate provided for the recognition of a Jewish Agency to advise and cooperate with the Palestine administration, to 'assist and take part in the development of the country'.

---

1. This memorandum was produced in Russian and English. The Russian version is printed in the corresponding Russian edition of the present volume and is on file. Jacob Robinson, who was presumably the author of the memorandum, added by hand: 'The original was mailed today by N[ahum] G[oldmann] to the Soviet delegation.'

The United States was not a member of the league, but on 30 June 1922, Congress adopted a resolution approving the undertaking. The mandate later was incorporated in the Anglo-American Convention of 3 December 1924.

World statesmen envisaged the eventual re-establishment of a Jewish state or commonwealth. This was made clear in the statements of Mr. Lloyd George, then Prime Minister, President Wilson, Field Marshal Jan Smuts, Lord Robert Cecil, Sir Herbert Samuel and Mr. Churchill.

The Promise to the Arabs: During the [World] War [I], commitments were made to the Arabs to further Arab independence in other parts of the Ottoman Empire. There was no conflict between the promises to the Jews and to the Arabs.

Sir Henry McMahon, who conducted the negotiations with the Arabs, later wrote: 'I feel it my duty to state, and I do so definitely and emphatically, that it was not intended by me in giving this pledge to King Husayn to include Palestine in the area in which Arab independence was promised. I also had every reason to believe at the time that the fact that Palestine was not included in my pledge was well understood by King Husayn.'

T.E. Lawrence, who participated in the negotiations with the Arabs, favoured Zionist colonization in Palestine, predicting that 'the consequences might be of the highest importance for the future of the Arab world'. Lawrence helped bring Jews and Arabs together at the Paris Peace Conference and Emir Feisal, the leading Arab spokesman, later King of Iraq, signed a treaty with Dr. Chaim Weizmann, agreeing to the carrying out of the Balfour Declaration. 'We will offer the Jews a hearty welcome home', he wrote.

As a condition, Feisal insisted on Arab self-government in the neighbouring Arab lands. Although it was delayed, that condition has now been fulfilled. There are today seven Arab states – five of them in the United Nations – spread over 1,650,000 square miles, 160 times the area of Palestine.

But the promise to the Jews has not been fulfilled. Palestine is today a police state. Development of the Jewish national home has been arrested by the mandatory power, although its only right to be in Palestine arises from the responsibility it assumed as trustee under the mandate to help the Jewish people rebuild their ancestral homeland.

The Palestine Development: In the last 25 years, Jewish colonization transformed a sterile and neglected land into a major self-sustaining economic centre in the Middle East. Palestine's population increased from 675,000 in 1920 to more than 1,800,000. The Jewish population rose from 67,000 to an estimated 600,000. In 1914 there were 43 Jewish settlements. Today there are 320. Industry grew rapidly in volume and diversity. The Jordan was harnessed for electric power, the Dead Sea yielded up its valuable potash and bromine, swamps were drained, terraces rebuilt, trees planted, the desert reclaimed. Schools, scientific institutions, hospitals were established. And urban Jews, drawn from trades and professions, became manual workers on the farms and in industry – integrated in a normal society.

The Arabs Prospered: Zionist colonization raised living standards for all. The Arabs were not displaced. On the contrary, while the Arab population in Transjordan remained at a standstill, the Arab population in Palestine rose from 515,000 in 1919 to 1,064,000 in 1944, partly because of immigration, but mostly, as Colonial Secretary Malcolm MacDonald told Parliament on 24 November 1938, 'It is because the Jewish people who have come to Palestine bring modern health services and other advantages that Arab men and women who would have been dead are alive today, that Arab children who would never have drawn breath have been born and grown strong.'

The rate of natural increase in Palestine is the highest recorded in any country.

The Obstacles: The dynamic development of Palestine was hindered by unsympathetic colonial administrators who, trained to deal with subject peoples and interested in preserving the status quo, made little positive contribution to the undertaking. Instead, they showed great solicitude for its opponents.

Early in 1920, anti-Zionist riots were organized in Jerusalem. Hajj Amin al-Husayni, convicted for his part in these murderous disturbances, never served his sentence, but was pardoned and appointed by the British administration to the influential post of grand mufti of Jerusalem. In 1929 and 1936, clothed in the immunity of the position thus conferred on him, he organized further anti-Jewish disturbances. (Later he was to foment a pro-Axis putsch in Iraq, whence he fled to Berlin to become a Hitler collaborator.) Time and again a vacillating colonial government failed to act decisively in fulfillment of a policy clearly laid down and internationally approved. Disturbances were rewarded by a suspension of immigration and the Arabs of Palestine were led to believe that violent resistance [to] the Zionist program would be rewarded. A major British act of appeasement was the partitioning of Palestine in 1921. Transjordan, with its 37,400 square miles of territory, was cut away, leaving only 10,400 square miles in the area west of the Jordan.

The Retreat: Severance of Transjordan from Palestine was the first breach of the Balfour promise, which had been understood to include all of historic Palestine. It was the beginning of a series of retreats which encouraged new Arab aggression and which culminated finally in the present illegal policy.

The mandate had obligated Great Britain to *facilitate* the Jewish national home. In the 1922 White Paper, the government proposed merely to permit the basic development, if the Jews supplied the means, not only for their own but also for Arab development. The 1930 (Passfield) White Paper attempted to subordinate Jewish to Arab development but was withdrawn by Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald in 1931. In 1937, the Royal Commission recommended a new partition of Palestine, though this time it was proposed to establish the partitioned area, one-fifth of the country west of the Jordan, as a Jewish state. The government accepted the report in principle but subsequently retreated again, and the Woodhead Commission, working out the details in 1938, reduced it to an absurdity.

Meanwhile, the propaganda of Mussolini and Hitler was being beamed to the Middle East. Arab leaders became Axis agitators. Competing with Germany and Italy for the favour of the Arabs, the British yielded to Arab terror and, following the discredited tactics of Munich appeasement, issued the MacDonald White Paper in 1939.

The Breach: The new policy, in flagrant violation of the mandate, limited Jewish immigration for a five-year period to 75,000 and made it dependent, thereafter, on Arab consent. Purchase of land by Jews was sharply restricted. (Under the subsequent 1940 land regulations, Jews were virtually debarred from acquiring land in 95 per cent of Palestine.) The Jews were to be reduced to a ghettoized minority in what was to become an Arab state in 10 years.

The 1939 White Paper was bitterly condemned in [the House of] Commons as a 'breach and a repudiation of Britain's pledges by Mr. Churchill, Leopold Amery, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Mr. Herbert Morrison and many others.

The Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations ruled that the White Paper was inconsistent with Britain's obligations under the mandate, but the league never acted. It ceased to function as war began.

The War Years: The White Paper went into effect but failed in its purpose to buy Arab support. Until Allied victory was assured, the Arabs remained openly pro-Axis. Egypt, also invaded, and Saudi Arabia, remained neutral. Syria and Lebanon were hotbeds of Axis intrigue. In Iraq, Prime Minister Rashid Ali al-Kilani, headed an abortive Axis-inspired revolt. It was not until February 1945, when the fighting was all but over, that Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Lebanon dutifully declared war on Germany, thus to qualify for seats in the United Nations before the March 1 deadline for admission.

In contrast, Jewish Palestine fought the Axis throughout the war. At the outbreak 136,200 Jewish men and women registered for war service. About 26,000 were enrolled in the armed forces and 7,000 more in local defence. Palestine was an important base for Allied operations and supply.

Meanwhile, in Europe, the White Paper proved a death warrant for tens of thousands of Jews who, denied a refuge in Palestine, were counted in the Nazi gas chamber census of 6,000,000 Jews. How many might have escaped if Palestine had been open will never be known.

Disillusionment: All through the war, the Jews appealed in vain for a relaxation of the White Paper policy. When war ended, it was believed that relief would come quickly for the homeless survivors of Hitler's concentration camps. The British Labour Party, in December 1944 and in April 1945, had vigorously attacked the White Paper. It was now called to power.

But days rolled into weeks and weeks into months. In August 1945, following Earl G. Harrison's report on the shocking conditions in the DP camps, President Truman appealed to the British to admit 100,000 Jews to Palestine. Great Britain countered with a proposal for an Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry. The United States agreed. The committee began hearings in January 1946. It toured the camps in Europe, it visited Palestine

and the Arab countries. In May 1946, it submitted unanimous recommendations. The committee urged immediate admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine and it recommended that the White Paper restrictions be set aside. But it made no positive proposals for a long-term political settlement.

Tactics of Delay: President Truman urged the British government to act without delay and offered United States cooperation. Prime Minister Attlee interposed new objections. He contended that additional troops would be required if more Jews were to be admitted. Paradoxically, he sought, as a condition precedent to further Jewish immigration, the disarmament of the Jewish self-defence forces. Members of the committee, recalling that Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin had promised to carry out the committee's recommendations if the committee were unanimous, charged Mr. Bevin with a new breach of faith.

Negotiations dragged on. The British came forward with a new plan (Grady-Morrison). As a price for the admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine, the Jews were asked to give up their rights under the mandate. Palestine was to be divided into Arab and Jewish provinces, under strict centralized British control. Immigration was to be a matter for British jurisdiction. This was the old 'federalization' plan in a new dress. It was wholly unacceptable to all the parties.

The Victims of Delay: Meanwhile, the plight of [the] Jewish survivors in Europe became critical. It was now clear that hundreds of thousands would be unable to regain status and possessions on soil poisoned by Hitlerite antisemitism. The number of displaced Jews swelled from 70,000 in 1945 to more than 250,000. Thousands set out for Palestine to reach it as best they could. Re-enacting one of the most tragic dramas of the war, they took to frail and unseaworthy craft to cross the Mediterranean. During the war Jews had sought escape from the Nazis; now they were running the blockade of their 'liberators'. They refused to accept the stigma of 'illegal immigrant', for they insisted that the White Paper, which walled them off from their homeland, was itself illegal.

Oblivious to their misery, the British mechanically limited Jewish immigration to a mere 1,500 a month. Their warships hunted down the refugees, who were at first herded into internment camps in Palestine and later deported to Cyprus.

The lawless British policy had inevitable consequences. Sporadic violence flared up in Palestine. The great majority of Jews deplored violence, but were powerless to stop it as the British poured 100,000 troops into Palestine and provocatively imposed the harshest restrictions on personal freedom, abrogating fundamental civil liberties, disrupting economic life and transforming Palestine into a police state. The situation steadily deteriorated.

On 4 October 1946, President Truman sought to end the impasse. He reiterated his plea for the admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine and he commended for British consideration a plan for the partition of Palestine into two sovereign states, which the Jewish Agency for Palestine was prepared to discuss with the British government. But the British rejected President

Truman's counsel. On 27 January 1947, the British and Arab states held new conferences in London. Mr. Bevin offered new concessions to the Arabs.

He proposed a five-year trusteeship for Palestine. His new plan was neither federalization nor partition. It provided, instead, for the fragmentation of the country into a number of local Jewish or Arab administrative areas. It limited Jewish immigration for the first two years to 4,000 a month, the question then to be referred to the high commissioner. Discriminatory anti-Jewish land regulations would continue. The Jews would be a permanent minority and an Arab state would eventually be established. The Arab states, demanding immediate stoppage of Jewish immigration, rejected Mr. Bevin's newest plan; the Jewish Agency informed Mr. Bevin that the plan was incompatible with the basic purposes of the mandate.

Having failed again, Mr. Bevin announced on 14 February 1947 that he would transfer the question to the United Nations.

The issue now comes before the UN two years after the defeat of Hitler. The Jews, who were Hitler's first victims, are about to begin the third year of waiting. The majority of the 1,500,000 Jews of Europe are determined to leave a continent which is little more than a graveyard for their 6,000,000 dead. They are resolved to begin life anew in a homeland of their own, where they will never again be the targets of intolerance and bigotry and where, as a free people, they may have a voice in their own future.

And the Jews of Palestine who had faith in the ideals for which the United Nations fought, wait for the day when the four freedoms[2] will repay their debt to the Ten Commandments.

81
D.R. Wahl to M. Grossman

COPY: ISA 93.03/2268/16
[Washington] 29 April 1947

Yesterday and today I sent to the first secretary of the Soviet embassy[1] materials provided by the Emergency Zionist Council and by the Jewish Agency for transmittal to the Soviet delegation at the United Nations.[2] Today

---

Doc. 80

2. On 6 January 1941, in the first State of the Union address to Congress of his third term in office, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt closed his speech with a description of four essential human freedoms — freedom of speech and expression; freedom of worship; freedom from want; and freedom from fear.

Doc. 81

1. Mikhail S. Vavilov, first secretary in the Soviet embassy in Washington.
2. See Doc. 80.

the Soviet embassy informed me that they had sent a telegram to Mr. Gromyko urging that he see me on behalf of American Jewish organizations and the Jewish Agency for Palestine. I am to call Mr. Gromyko on Friday morning, and if he is unable to see me I will probably see Mr. Tsarapkin, who is his alternate on the delegation.[3] The Jewish Agency people here are somewhat unprepared for direction on what should be discussed with the Russians on their behalf. It has been suggested that Arthur Lourie speak with me before I have this appointment and that some material be procured from the Hashomer Hatsair. In any case, I think you should talk with Arthur Lourie, Si Kenen and any others who should be involved regarding my discussion with Gromyko. Since I am informed by the Jewish Agency that they have been unable to make contact with the Russians, this opportunity probably is the only one available for channelizing any thinking. Of course it may be that the Agency people would not want me to discuss these matters with the Russians, in which case it should be decided whether I see Gromyko at all or whether I should see him on behalf of the conference, representing American Jewish organizations[4] and excluding from the discussions the Agency itself. In any case, this matter should be thought through in New York before I call Gromyko's office on Friday. If, in the meantime, Mr. Gromyko's office should try to reach me at the Conference to make an appointment, ask them to wait until I can call myself on Friday morning.

[...][5]

82
I. Hamlin to A. Lourie (New York)

COPY: ISA 93.03/2268/16
New York, 29 April 1947

I spoke today to Dave Wahl who informs me that Vavilov, first secretary of the Russian embassy, has asked him for material to give to members of the Russian delegation.[1] Yesterday we made up a kit of available material here and sent it down to the Russian embassy.

Doc. 81

3. See Doc. 84.
4. The American Jewish Conference – a representative body of major American Jewish organizations established in 1943 to deal with problems that would confront the Jewish people in Europe and Palestine after the war. Dissolved in 1949.
5. One sentence containing extraneous information has been deleted.

Doc. 82

1. See Docs. 80–1.

Today I spoke with Wahl and suggested to him that when he arrives in New York on Thursday, he immediately get in touch with you about this. He tells me that though the Russian delegation is refraining from meeting with any partisan spokesman on the Palestine question, he, Wahl, can have entree to Sorobkin.[2] I do not know what is being done in New York with the Russians, but I suggested that Wahl speak to you in the event that this additional contact is necessary.

A supplemental problem exists in the question of finding proper written material for the Russian delegation. Very little of the standard material we have in this office is suitable for them. I therefore suggested to Wahl that he speak with you about the possibility of contacting the Hashomer Hatsair or the Left Poale Zion in New York who may have suitable printed material concerning, particularly, social and economic problems in Palestine and the Middle East. [...]

83
A.A. Gromyko's Speech at the First Special Session of the UN General Assembly

Official Records of the First Special Session of the General Assembly, Vol. I, Plenary Meetings of the General Assembly, 28 April–15 May, pp. 127–35

New York, 14 May 1947

Mr. Gromyko (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): The course of the discussion, both in the plenary meetings of the General Assembly and in the First Committee, has shown that the Palestine question has become an acute political problem. Apparently, this opinion is shared by all the delegations which took part in the discussion. This conclusion is supported by the very fact that this question is being discussed by the United Nations.

However, the fact that the Palestine question has become a subject of discussion in the General Assembly not only shows that the question is acute, but also imposes upon the United Nations the responsibility for its solution. This fact obliges us to study the question carefully from every angle; and we should be guided by the purposes and principles of our organization and by the interests of the maintenance of peace and international security.

The course of the discussion has also shown that at this special session of the Assembly it is apparently difficult to take any definite and, still more, any final decision on the substance of the problem. Thus, the discussion at this

2. Reference is apparently to Semen Tsarapkin, member of the Soviet delegation to the United Nations.

session can be considered only as the initial stage of the consideration of the Palestine problem. In the opinion of all the delegations, the General Assembly will have to take a decision on the substance of this question at its next regular session at the end of 1947.

Nevertheless, the discussion has shown that the delegations of a number of states considered it useful to exchange views on certain important aspects of the Palestine question at this session. The discussion, even though incomplete, of certain important aspects of this question has been useful. In the first place, it has enabled delegations to gain a better knowledge of the facts relating to the Palestine question and, in particular, to the situation which has developed in that country at the present time. In the second place, such a discussion, although it is of a preliminary nature, lightens the task of defining the functions and direction of the work of the committee which we are about to establish for the purpose of preparing proposals on the substance of the question for the regular session of the General Assembly.

In discussing the Palestine question, even in a preliminary fashion, and in discussing the tasks and functions of the aforementioned committee, we cannot fail to note, first of all, the important fact that the mandatory system of administration of Palestine, established in 1922, has not justified itself. It has not passed the test. It is hardly possible to contest the accuracy of this conclusion. It is an indisputable fact that the aims laid down at the time of the establishment of the mandate have not been achieved. The solemn declarations which accompanied the establishment of the mandatory system of administration of Palestine have remained declarations and have not been transformed into facts.

The conclusion that the mandatory system of administration of Palestine has not justified itself is confirmed by the whole history of the administration of Palestine on the basis of this system, not to mention the confirmation of this conclusion by the situation which has developed in that country at the present time. In this connection, it may be recalled that in 1937 the British Peel Commission, after studying the Palestine situation, declared that it was impossible to carry out the mandate. Such a conclusion was also reached by the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, which also pointed out the 'impossibility' of implementing the Palestine mandate. The committee we are about to set up should ascertain the historical facts relating to this question.

Many other facts relating to the history of the mandatory administration of Palestine could be adduced to confirm the bankruptcy of this system of administration. It is hardly necessary, however, to enumerate these facts in detail. In this connection, for instance, it is enough to mention the Arab uprising which took place in 1936 and continued for several years. There are also enough facts relating to the situation existing in Palestine at the present time to confirm the aforementioned conclusion. We all know of the sanguinary events taking place in Palestine. Such events are becoming more and more frequent.

For this reason, these events are attracting increasing attention from the peoples of the world and, above all, from the United Nations. This question is being considered by the General Assembly as a direct result of the bankruptcy of the mandatory system of administration of Palestine, which has led to an extreme aggravation of the situation and to sanguinary events in that country. The very fact that the United Kingdom government itself submitted this question for the consideration of the General Assembly is extremely indicative. This fact can only be considered as an admission that it is impossible for the existing situation in Palestine to continue. The special committee should make a careful study of the situation at present prevailing in Palestine.

It is well known that representatives of the United Kingdom government have stated, at various times, even before the question was submitted to the General Assembly, that the mandatory system of administration of Palestine has not justified itself and that the solution of the problem of how to deal with Palestine should be found by the United Nations. Thus, for instance, Mr. Bevin made the following statement in the House of Commons on 18 February 1947:

> We intend to place before them [the United Nations] a historical account of the way in which His Majesty's government have discharged their trust in Palestine over the last twenty-five years. We shall explain that the mandate has proved to be unworkable in practice and that the obligations undertaken to the two communities in Palestine have been shown to be irreconcilable.

This statement by the British foreign minister directly and openly recognizes the real situation which has been brought about by the mandatory administration of Palestine. It is an admission that this administration did not solve the question of mutual relations between the Arabs and the Jews, which is one of the most important and acute questions, and that this administration has not ensured the achievement of the aims laid down when the mandate was established.

The existing form of government, as Mr. Bevin has affirmed, is acceptable neither to the Arab population nor to the Jewish population of Palestine. Both the Arabs and the Jews protest against it. It has never enjoyed, and does not enjoy the support of the peoples of Palestine; and without such support it can only lead to further difficulties and complexities in the situation. Concerning the attitude of the Arab and Jewish populations towards the mandatory system of administration of Palestine, the British foreign minister stated in his speech to the House of Commons on 26 February 1947 that the Palestine administration was faced with an extremely difficult task, did not enjoy the support of the people and was subjected to criticism from both sides.

The committee we are about to set up cannot fail to take into account the conclusions reached by the United Kingdom government itself concerning the results of the mandatory administration of Palestine.

It is well known that it is not only the United Kingdom government which has reached this conclusion. For instance, the so-called Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry on Palestine, which studied the question in 1946, came

to a conclusion which was essentially the same. This committee's report on the prevailing situation in Palestine contains the following passage:

> Palestine is an armed camp. We saw signs of this almost as soon as we crossed the frontier and we became more and more aware of the tense atmosphere each day. Many buildings have barbed wire and other defences. We ourselves were closely guarded by armed police and were often escorted by armoured cars... throughout the country there are substantially built police barracks.(*)

That is how the Anglo-American Committee described the position in Palestine. Its description of the situation is still another proof of the results of the mandatory administration of Palestine. That Palestine, as the committee states, has become 'an armed camp' is a fact which speaks for itself. In such circumstances, there can be no serious talk of defending the interests of the population of Palestine, of improving the material conditions of its existence, or of raising its cultural level.

The same Anglo-American Committee pointed out the following extremely interesting facts:

> The total number of persons in full-time employment in the police and prison administration reached 15,000 in 1945. This figure is extremely indicative. It explains to us how the considerable funds, which are a burden on the population, are expended. In other circumstances, these funds might be used in the interests of the economic and cultural development of the country and in the interests of its population. Here is another fact. In 1944–45, 18,400,000 US dollars were spent on the maintenance of 'law and order'. In the same financial year, only 2,200,000 US dollars were spent on health measures, and 2,800,000 US dollars on education.

In citing these figures, the Anglo-American Committee came to the following noteworthy conclusion: 'Thus, even from a budgetary point of view, Palestine has developed into a semi-military or police state.'(**)

The above-mentioned facts from the report of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry on Palestine, are of considerable interest in describing the situation prevailing in Palestine, and must lead us to consider seriously how the existing situation can be rectified, and how a solution of the Palestine problem can be found in conformity with the interests of its peoples and also with the general interests of the United Nations. The task of the special committee should be to help the United Nations to achieve such a solution of the problem by studying the actual situation in Palestine on the spot.

Is it surprising, in view of the situation prevailing in Palestine, that both the Jews and the Arabs demand the termination of the mandate? They are fully

---

(*) See *Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry — Report to the United States Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom*, chapter IX, section 1. Lausanne, Switzerland, 1946.

(**) See *Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry — Report to the United States Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom*, chapter III, section 4.

agreed on this; there is no disagreement between them on this point. The United Nations must take this fact into account when it considers the question of Palestine's future.

In discussing the question of the task of the committee for the preparation of proposals on Palestine, we must take into account another important aspect of this question. As we know, the aspirations of a considerable part of the Jewish people are linked with the problem of Palestine and of its future administration. This fact scarcely requires proof. It is not surprising, therefore, that great attention was given to this aspect of the question, both in the General Assembly and at the meetings of the First Committee. Interest in this aspect is understandable and fully justified.

During the last war, the Jewish people underwent exceptional sorrow and suffering. Without any exaggeration, this sorrow and suffering are indescribable. It is difficult to express them in dry statistics on the Jewish victims of the fascist aggressors. The Jews in territories where the Hitlerites held sway were subjected to almost complete physical annihilation. The total number of members of the Jewish population who perished at the hands of the Nazi executioners is estimated at approximately six million. Only about a million and a half Jews in Western Europe survived the war.

But these figures, although they give an idea of the number of victims of the fascist aggressors among the Jewish people, give no idea of the difficulties in which large numbers of Jewish people found themselves after the war.

Large numbers of the surviving Jews of Europe were deprived of their countries, their homes and their means of existence. Hundreds of thousands of Jews are wandering about in various countries of Europe in search of means of existence and in search of shelter. A large number of them are in camps for displaced persons and are still continuing to undergo great privations. To these privations our attention was drawn in particular by the representative of the Jewish Agency, whom we heard in the First Committee.

It may well be asked if the United Nations, in view of the difficult situation of hundreds of thousands of the surviving Jewish population, can fail to show an interest in the situation of these people, torn away from their countries and their homes. The United Nations cannot and must not regard this situation with indifference, since this would be incompatible with the high principles proclaimed in its charter, which provide for the defence of human rights, irrespective of race, religion or sex. The time has come to help these people, not by word, but by deeds. It is essential to show concern for the urgent needs of a people which have undergone such great suffering as a result of the war brought about by Hitlerite Germany. This is a duty of the United Nations.

In view of the necessity of manifesting concern for the needs of the Jewish people who find themselves without homes and without means of existence, the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics thinks it essential, in this connection, to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the following important circumstance. Past experience, particularly during World War II, shows that no Western European state was able to provide adequate assistance

for the Jewish people in defending its rights and its very existence from the violence of the Hitlerites and their allies. This is an unpleasant fact, but unfortunately, like all other facts, it must be admitted.

The fact that no western European state has been able to ensure the defence of the elementary rights of the Jewish people, and to safeguard it against the violence of the fascist executioners, explains the aspirations of the Jews to establish their own state. It would be unjust not to take this into consideration and to deny the right of the Jewish people to realize this aspiration. It would be unjustifiable to deny this right to the Jewish people, particularly in view of all it has undergone during the Second World War. Consequently, the study of this aspect of the problem and the preparation of relevant proposals must constitute an important task of the special committee.

I shall now deal with the fundamental question in connection with the discussion of the tasks and powers of the committee we are about to set up, that is, the question of Palestine's future. It is well known that there are many different plans regarding the future of Palestine and regarding the decisions of the Jewish people in connection with the Palestine question. In particular, several proposals were drawn up in connection with this question by the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry on Palestine, to which I have referred. Among the better-known plans on the question of the future administration of Palestine, I should like to mention the following:

1. The establishment of a single Arab–Jewish state, with equal rights for Arabs and Jews;

2. The partition of Palestine into two independent states, one Arab and one Jewish;

3. The establishment of an Arab state in Palestine, without due regard for the rights of the Jewish population;

4. The establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, without due regard for the rights of the Arab population.

Each of these four basic plans has, in turn, different variants for regulating relations between the Arabs and the Jews and for settling certain other problems. I shall not analyze all these plans in detail at the present time. The Soviet Union will explain its position on the various plans in greater detail when definite proposals are prepared and considered and, more particularly, when decisions are taken on the future of Palestine. For the time being, I shall confine myself to a few remarks on the substance of the proposed plans, from the point of view of defining the committee's tasks in that field.

In analyzing the various plans for the future of Palestine, it is essential, first of all, to bear in mind the specific aspects of this question. It is essential to bear in mind the indisputable fact that the population of Palestine consists of two peoples, the Arabs and the Jews. Both have historical roots in Palestine. Palestine has become the homeland of both these peoples, each of which plays an important part in the economy and the cultural life of the country.

Neither the historic past nor the conditions prevailing in Palestine at present can justify any unilateral solution of the Palestine problem, either in favour of

establishing an independent Arab state, without consideration for the legitimate rights of the Jewish people, or in favour of the establishment of an independent Jewish state, while ignoring the legitimate rights of the Arab population. Neither of these extreme decisions would achieve an equitable solution of this complicated problem, especially since neither would ensure the settlement of relations between the Arabs and the Jews, which constitutes the most important task.

An equitable solution can be reached only if sufficient consideration is given to the legitimate interests of both these peoples. All this leads the Soviet delegation to the conclusion that the legitimate interests of both the Jewish and Arab populations of Palestine can be duly safeguarded only through the establishment of an independent, dual, democratic, homogeneous Arab–Jewish state. Such a state must be based on equality of rights for the Jewish and the Arab populations, which might lay foundations of cooperation between these two peoples to their mutual interest and advantage. It is well known that this plan for the solution of Palestine's future has its supporters in that country itself.

Contemporary history provides examples not only of the racial and religious discrimination which, unfortunately, still exists in certain countries. It also gives us examples of the peaceful collaboration of different nationalities within the framework of a single state, in the course of which collaboration each nationality has unlimited possibilities for contribution of its labour and showing its talents within the framework of a single state and in the common interests of all the people. Is it not obvious that it would be extremely useful, in reaching a decision on the Palestine problem, to take into consideration existing examples of such friendly co-existence and brotherly cooperation among various nationalities within a single state?

Thus, the solution of the Palestine problem by the establishment of a single Arab–Jewish state with equal rights for the Jews and the Arabs may be considered as one of the possibilities and one of the more noteworthy methods for the solution of this complicated problem. Such a solution of the problem of Palestine's future might be a sound foundation for the peaceful co-existence and cooperation of the Arab and Jewish populations of Palestine, in the interests of both these peoples and to the advantage of the entire Palestine population and of the peace and security of the Near East.

If this plan proved impossible to implement, in view of the deterioration in the relations between the Jews and the Arabs – and it will be very important to know the special committee's opinion on this question – then it would be necessary to consider the second plan which, like the first, has its supporters in Palestine, and which provides for the partition of Palestine into two independent single states, one Jewish and one Arab. I repeat that such a solution of the Palestine problem would be justifiable only if relations between the Jewish and Arab populations of Palestine indeed proved to be so bad that it would be impossible to reconcile them and to ensure the peaceful co-existence of the Arabs and the Jews.

Of course, both these possible plans for the solution of the problem of Palestine's future must be studied by the committee. Its task must be a multilateral and careful discussion of the plans for the administration of Palestine, with a view to submitting, to the next regular session of the General Assembly, some well-considered and reasoned proposals, which would help the United Nations to reach a just solution of this problem in conformity with the interests of the peoples of Palestine, the interests of the United Nations and our common interest in the maintenance of peace and international security.

Such are the considerations which the Soviet delegation thought necessary to express at this initial stage of the consideration of the Palestine problem.

84
D.R. Wahl to A.H. Silver (New York)

COPY: ISA 93.03/2268/16
[New York] 15 May 1947

Dear Dr. Silver,

As you may have been informed, I have done considerable work, both with the Soviet embassy and with the Soviet delegation in New York. I must report to you that the embassy in Washington has been most anxious to receive all possible help and suggestions for the benefit of their delegation at the United Nations. They submitted by special pouch to their delegation all materials which I had gathered from the Zionist Emergency Council office and the Jewish Agency office in Washington. In addition to my seeing Mr. Gromyko and Mr. Tsarapkin personally in New York, the Soviet embassy in Washington transmitted to them by pouch a special covering memorandum of analysis which I prepared, setting forth the desires of the Agency and the American Jewish community *vis-à-vis* the Palestine situation.

I must report to you that in all my discussions with the embassy and with the Soviet delegation I found no resistance to the expressions of the Jewish people as stated in the official Agency policy positions, and it is a matter of great gratification to me, as it must be to you, that the Soviet delegation performed beyond what we have been accustomed to expect from any Great Power in our behalf. I wish to state categorically that it would be a grievous error to attribute the performance of the Soviet delegation to any overwhelming ability on the part of myself or any other special pleader to convince them of the position they should take. I think it is only practical to realize that conviction was possible because there was also coincidence of interest and attitude.

In only one respect did I find the Soviet delegation going out of its way to alter a position which it was about to take. That had to do with the stand on the composition of the inquiry commission. Mr. Gromyko was rather surprised

to learn that the Agency preferred to include Great Britain, the Arab countries and neutral countries, as well as the Agency, in a non-voting capacity. Originally (and this is extremely confidential) they had planned to take a stand which would exclude Great Britain, the Arab powers and the Great Powers, in order to give the Jewish community of Palestine a better advantage. It was when I transmitted to them the instruction of the Agency executive that they are willing to change their stand and come out favourably for inclusion of the big five as well as the Agency, even though it meant including the Arab countries.[1] From personal conversation I can report to you, the press to the contrary notwithstanding, that there was the greatest antagonism between the Arab delegation[s] and the Soviet delegation. There is indeed much more compatibility between the Soviet delegates and Agency aspirations.

I report this to you in some detail because, while this is the first time in which I had specific contact with Soviet representatives in connection with the Palestine matter, it is in keeping with the generous attitude which they have expressed with respect to Jewish displaced persons which is quite at variance with their stand on non-Jewish DPs. Were I to review my experience of the past year and a half with the displaced persons problem, I would have to report in all fairness that it was the cooperation of the Soviet government in repatriating many thousands of Polish Jews which made it possible to build up the Jewish DP population now in Germany from 70,000 at war's end, to almost a quarter of a million at the present time, and certainly no one will gainsay that it is the pressure of this large Jewish DP population which is of inestimable value to the Zionist cause with respect to increasing immigration to Palestine and building towards a Jewish majority in Palestine.

I report this to you in the hope that both the Agency and the Zionist Organization of America will express formally, both to the Soviet embassy and its delegation, their gratification with the Soviet contribution to progress at [the] United Nations, particularly as to the clarification of issues. I should like also to urge that at this time and in the new climate which has been developed, the Agency do its utmost to establish rapport for future reference with the Soviet[s] in order to counter-balance the anti-Jewish attitude representative of both the British and American attitudes as expressed in the course of this United Nations debate.

With sincere regards,

David R. Wahl
Washington Secretary

---

1. The composition of UNSCOP was a subject of American–Soviet dispute in the last stages of the Special Session of the UN General Assembly. The Soviet delegation preferred a large committee made up of the five permanent members of the Security Council, with the addition of six other members, representing the various blocs of the Assembly, including an Arab state. The Americans proposed a small committee of disinterested states. Eventually a compromise was reached: none of the Great Powers was represented on it, but it comprised 11 members, including two countries from the Slav bloc. Both the Arab states and the Jewish Agency were excluded from the committee.

85
Ch. Greenberg to B. Locker (London)

TEL: CZA Z4/10388II
[New York] 20 May 1947

Benartzi [Gromyko] in conversation David [Ben-Gurion], Nahum [Goldmann], merely asked question about certain aspects *haluka* [partition]. Didn't add anything of importance to contents his address.[1] When asked about possibility our taking up matters with his superiors replied this unnecessary since he here but promised report.

Regards,

Greenberg

86
Circular of the Mapai Central Committee to its Emissaries Abroad

COPY: CZA S53/12C
Tel Aviv, 29 May 1947

Dear Comrades,

In our previous letter we discussed Gromyko's speech at the UN,[1] which turned into a very important event. Since then two weeks have already passed, and it must be noted that the speech continues to occupy centre stage. [...][2] However, the Gromyko episode remains *the subject* of discussions, arguments, and assessments. Because everyone, Jews and gentiles alike, considers it an expression of a shift in Soviet policy towards Zionism.

Ben-Gurion on Gromyko's speech: Ben-Gurion, who arrived from America on the day the Assefat Hanivharim [Elected Assembly] session began and who reported to that meeting on the UN Special Session, made the following comments, *inter alia*, on Gromyko's speech: 'It has been a long time since we heard the representative of a great world power – apart from the remarks of President Truman – speak in such shocking and accurate terms as did Gromyko on behalf of the Soviet Union about the suffering of the Jewish people, its appalling losses in the last world war, the tribulations and the impasse of hundreds of thousands of Jews, the remnants of European Jewry who are searching in vain for a haven. But the importance and surprise of Gromyko's remarks lay not in the description of the Jewish Holocaust, but in the *practical conclusion* he drew from the analysis of the Jewish situation – a conclusion in fact reached by the Zionist movement decades ago, but for the

Doc. 85
1. See Doc. 83.

Doc. 86
1. Doc. 83.
2. A passage, enumerating various political and military events in Palestine, has been deleted.

first time confirmed for the world to hear by an emissary of the Soviet Union: the Jewish people's aspiration to its own state.

The following is the key passage of the speech:

> It would be unjust not to take into account the Jews' aspirations to establish their own state and to deny the Jewish people's right to realize those aspirations. Denying that right to the Jewish people cannot be justified, especially if we take into account all they endured in the Second World War. Therefore, the investigation of this aspect of the problem and the preparation of appropriate proposals should also constitute an important task of the committee.

Ben-Gurion cautioned against exaggerating the importance of statements in our favour made by world rulers. However, he stressed that he must note with more than a little satisfaction the moral and political value of the Soviet Union's approach to the dual question of the People of Israel and the Land of Israel, as reflected in Gromyko's speech.

[...][3]

[Ben-Gurion also said]: 'And I want to add the following: This time I had a lengthy talk with Gromyko, in which I heard from him elaborations about the official speech he delivered in the [General] Assembly of the United Nations, and I of course elaborated upon my remarks to the Political Committee. I do not think I need relate here what I told him, and I cannot relate what he told me; but I can say that in general the additional clarifications were positive: in any event they did not diminish in the least the impression that was gained by the remarks made in public to the United Nations [General] Assembly.'

The English in the wake of Gromyko's declaration: The reverberations reaching us through the British press indicate that Gromyko's speech came as no small surprise to the British as well. This time an unpleasant surprise. The British press is still continuing to rehash the speech. On the one hand, the British papers claim that we are exaggerating its Zionist value, and on the other hand, they are distorting what we say, in order to alienate us from Russia's friendship. For example, *The Times* distorted Ben-Gurion's remarks to the Assefat Hanivharim with one little addition: 'Russia broke promises in the past.' Moreover, they are interpreting Bevin's statement in the House of Commons, 'that Britain is determined to remain in the Middle East, *as a reply* to Gromyko's Zionist speech at the UN.

And what is the opinion of the opposition in the Histadrut? In our previous letter we were able to inform you about the initial reactions to Gromyko's speech in *Al hamishmar* and *Kol haam*.[4] It should be noted that *Mishmar* put forward an indirect argument against Gromyko's alternative – [creation of] a Jewish state by means of partition. In other words, [the paper] has begun to argue against the tendency towards a state, but without saying so explicitly. The complaint is directed against the Jewish Agency Executive for acting to bring about a Jewish state, not against Gromyko.

---

3. One paragraph, containing a summary of Gromyko's speech (Doc. 83), has been omitted.
4. The daily organs of the left-wing Zionist Hashomer Hatsair and the Palestine Communist Party (PCP).

It is interesting that this time the P[alestine] C[ommunist] P[arty] is also following in the footsteps of *Al hamishmar*: Here is a passage from *Kol haam* on this subject:

> Everyone who is acquainted with the Soviet Union's position on the question of our country will have no undue difficulty understanding that the Soviet public sees only the liquidation of British imperialist rule as the basis for a just solution of the national problem in our country. There are many paths to a life of friendly partnership, a life of peace among peoples. The Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia – these are instructive examples of a just solution of the national problem which furthers the interests of large and small nations. Here the national question has found its solution not in the form of partition, but on the basis of unity. On the basis of this unity a solution of the Palestine question is also possible. The campaign for partition on the part of Ben-Gurion and others dovetails with Bevin's policy, which is aimed at strengthening and intensifying imperialist rule in the Middle East and in our land. The problem can be resolved only by the establishment of a democratic, independent Jewish-Arab state, for only a program to create independent political life for Jews and Arabs will enable maximum mobilization of the forces for the war against imperialism. But the 'partition' plan aggravates the dispute between Jews and Arabs, and the only beneficiary is imperialism.

It should be noted that Gromyko's speech has also caused ideological difficulties for the Movement for Ahdut Haavoda – Left Poale Zion. That party, of course, was also among those which sent congratulatory cables to Russia after Gromyko's speech. However, while [its] cable contains, among other points, a call for a Jewish state, the weekly's editorial, which is devoted to the speech, apart from its great *nebulousness*, is clear in its rejection of Gromyko's two alternatives. Here is a typical passage from the article:

> It is not the *form* of the solution that the Gromyko declaration pretends to determine and disclose in advance, before the conclusion of the inquiry, but rather the *content* of the solution to our people's problem, which [the declaration] lays down at the outset, openly and explicitly, on two main foundations: Jewish political *independence* and mass Jewish *aliya*. These are the two elements that in retrospect introduced into what was a balanced declaration great doubts about the reality of the *division of power* in the form of a bi-national state, to the extent that this might perpetuate the currently existing balance of national forces in Palestine. These two elements also cast doubt on the substance of the proposal to partition the country without a state of true independence in the western area of influence, without the territory or the ability to concentrate mass *aliya*.
>
> The major thrust of the content and meaning of Gromyko's declaration boils down to the liquidation of the regime that is exploiting an international mandate to establish a 'semi-military-police state'; it [implies] the rapid advancement of the Zionist enterprise, including the immediate immigration of 'the many Jews who survived in Europe without a country of residence, without shelter, without means of subsistence', in order to develop Jewish political independence as a factor of peace and progress on the battlefield of the Middle East
>
> That is the substance of the declaration, which in this transition period implies only one political framework, that of *international supervision*, which introduces

the Soviet Union as a factor having full and equal rights in determining the fate of our country.

Since the opposition in the Histadrut appears as opposition to Gromyko and to our political leadership, the Palestine Communist Party has called on the opposition parties to [show] 'unity for the sake of a democratic program'. Among other points, *Kol haam* says:

> Today Ben-Gurion and [Rabbi Abba Hillel] Silver symbolize the policy that has brought calamity upon the *yishuv*. They are [also] the embodiment of a policy without prospects, with no way out, a policy of submission. The opposition parties in the Histadrut – the Communist Party, Hashomer Hatsair and parts of the Ahdut Haavoda party which oppose [the] Biltmore [Program][5] – bear responsibility for the future of the *yishuv*, [and] the future of friendly relations with the land of socialism.
>
> This responsibility must of necessity find expression in the elimination of the monopoly of Ben-Gurion and Co. in representing the *yishuv*. Moreover, the opposition parties must declare during the elections that Ben-Gurion has no right to speak in the name of the entire *yishuv*.
>
> If Hashomer Hatsair and Ahdut Haavoda–Poale Zion continue to accept Ben-Gurion's monopoly in representing the *yishuv*, then these parties will not be fulfilling their role.
>
> The working class within the country and the progressive and democratic camp throughout the world will be able to draw the appropriate conclusions from their behaviour.
>
> It should be stated that the explicit threat voiced by 'the progresive and democratic camp throughout the world' has had no impact on these two parties. But they have made a gesture towards [the PCP] in another sphere: in the Constituent Assembly they voted in favour of the inclusion of the PCP representative in the National Council.

The Arabs following the Gromyko speech: It is noteworthy that the tide of great satisfaction and optimism, which had swelled when the Arab Higher Committee also received a conciliatory invitation to appear before the Political Committee [of the UN], gave way to growing melancholy and depression. This was induced when it became clear that the terms of reference of the investigative committee ignore the Arabs' requests and that the committee will not co-opt a representative from an Arab state.[6] Then comes Gromyko's surprising statement and heightens their perplexity and anger.

---

5. The Biltmore program, adopted by the American Zionist Federation in May 1942, and later by the Zionist movement as a whole, called for Palestine to become a 'Jewish commonwealth integrated in the structure of the new democratic world'.
6. For the composition of UNSCOP see Doc. 84, n. 1. Determining its terms of reference was also a subject of contention, the Arabs insisting on eliminating any reference to the plight of European Jewry, restricting the investigation to Palestine and binding it in advance to the principle of self-determination of peoples. The Zionists favoured a more general wording and empowering the committee to conduct investigations outside Palestine. The final version was much more akin to the Zionist view, calling upon the committee to 'conduct investigations in Palestine and wherever it may deem useful' and to 'submit such proposals, as it may consider appropriate for the solution of the problem of Palestine' (see *GA OR, First Special Session*, UN document A/310, pp. 6–7).

There is no longer any doubt that Gromyko's speech came as a stunning surprise to the Arabs, since Russia had strongly supported their demand that the [General Assembly] session, and then the investigative committee, discuss immediate independence. The Arabs tried to extract the maximum benefit from Russia as a bogeyman against the Anglo-Saxons. But at the same time, the Arabs were not ready to compensate Russia for its support. Following Gromyko's remarks, the Arabs tried to hide their consternation by blurring the issue, hushing it up, and distorting its implications. Not only did they emphasize the attack on the British and the mandate and try to construe the demand for a bi-national state as support for the Arabs' insistence on a 'democratic' Palestinian state containing a [numerically] frozen Jewish minority lacking communal political rights and with no clarity about how far individual Jews would enjoy equal political rights (Jamal Husayni speaks about the pre-1920 Jews; Fares al-Khuri about the 'loyal' Jewish citizens; the Arab left about the Jews currently in the country) – but they completely ignored Gromyko's recognition of the Jewish national home, the Jews' right to a state, the connection between the DPs and the Palestine problem, and partition as an alternative solution to a bi-national state. The Arab left, which is now in a delicate situation, tried to blur and distort Gromyko's statement by construing it to mean that Russia in fact supports a democratic Palestinian state with full equal rights for all the Jews in the country (not a bi-national state); but Gromyko cautioned the Arabs that by their uncompromising stand they might bring about a very undesirable solution: partition. The Arab communists, who oppose partition no less than the mufti, are directing their full wrath at the extremism and fanaticism of the official Palestinian leadership, which [they say] is helping [bring about] partition by its racist hatred of the Jews and its refusal to recognize the existing Jewish community in Palestine.

It should be pointed out that in any event Gromyko's remarks did not generate a direct Arab attack on Russia: generally it was noted with disappointment that Russia was no better than the other imperialist powers, i.e., it is on the same level as Britain and the United States. But perceptive Arab circles inferred from Gromyko's remarks that [the Arabs] should give more consideration to the Soviets and abandon their exclusive Anglo-Saxon orientation; these circles believe that the Arabs must pay Russia a higher price in order to win it over. Another result of Gromyko's remarks is the Arabs' growing ambition to strengthen their relations with Asiatic states such as Turkey, India, [and] Iran, with the aim of establishing a pan-Asian bloc against the powers.

[...][7]

7. The rest of the document, which deals with internal Arab politics and the possible Arab reaction to UNSCOP, has been omitted.

87
E. Epstein to the Jewish Agency Executive

COPY: CZA S25/6607
[Washington] 25 June 1947
Confidential

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH DR. VLADIMIR VELEBIT, YUGOSLAV UNDER-SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

I first met Dr. Velebit in Cairo during the war when he was a general in Tito's army. It was he who headed the Partisans' delegation to London to negotiate on military and political questions with Churchill. He came to the United States to attend the UN Special Session on Palestine and he remained here for negotiations with the US government on questions of reparations.

I met him several times during the session and he tried to persuade me from the beginning about the friendly intentions of his and other governments of the Slav bloc. After Gromyko's statement Dr. Velebit told me that he knew that it was forthcoming but could not tell me about the matter in advance, as he was pledged to secrecy.

Dr. Velebit had dinner at our home where we had an opportunity to spend several hours in uninterrupted conversation. I found him very well informed about the Jewish situation in Europe. He described, in a most vivid and colourful manner, the prevailing misery and socio-economic insecurity of the Jewish DPs, whose numbers are much larger than is officially admitted. In his opinion, only a small proportion of the Jews in Hungary, Romania or Bulgaria will be able to adjust themselves to the changing conditions in these countries. Very few Jews have shown, as yet, the desire to integrate themselves into the new social and economic patterns taking shape in the above-mentioned countries. The governments, while they are anxious to avoid any coercion against them, would be extremely relieved, especially in Romania and Hungary, if at least a large part of the Jews were to emigrate elsewhere. This would also resolve the problem of antisemitism, which facilitates and breeds all kinds of conspiracies against the new regimes among reactionary and counter-revolutionary elements. In Dr. Velebit's opinion under these circumstances, no fewer than a million or a million and a half Jews would have to leave central Europe – a unique and historic opportunity for the Zionist movement to achieve its ends on an unprecedented scale, as he remarked.

The Soviet approach to this entire question was guided by realistic but far-sighted considerations. The Russians and their allies have come to the conclusion that only in Palestine can central European Jewry be absorbed successfully, especially in view of the fact that no country in the world is willing to admit large numbers of Jews. The Polish, Czechoslovak and Yugoslav governments, which knew more about Zionism and the success of

Jewish colonization in Palestine than do the Russians, (-- --)[1] both before and during the Special Session, with proper data on this subject.

In reply to my question as to how far Gromyko's statement represented the fixed and determined policy of the Soviet government on the Palestine question, Dr. Velebit stressed that the statement was the result of a very thorough and careful analysis of the problem, and he said that we would find ourselves the victims of a cynical and distorted interpretation if we were to construe it simply as a temporary manoeuvre on the part of the Soviet government. The Soviet government would not risk engaging itself in a conflict with the Arabs for the sake of some temporary advantage. We should not, however, read things into the statement which were not said or meant, and thus avoid unnecessary misunderstandings in the future between ourselves and the Soviet government.

When I asked him for further elaboration on this point, he told me that we have to take Mr. Gromyko's statement as it stands, without highlighting what we believe to be a better solution. Undoubtedly, he meant to say that we should not indulge in wishful thinking by emphasizing the partition references over the bi-national state references, but should interpret the Soviet position on the basis of the exact statement.

He went on to say that if a Jewish state is established in Palestine the Slav bloc will consider it a factor for peace in the Middle East and not a centre of international intrigue. In the event of another war, Dr. Velebit said emphatically, the Jews, who were saved from extinction in the last war, will again be the first to suffer. Palestinian Jewry, sandwiched between Russia and the Western powers might easily be wiped out, as might the remnant of European Jewry, living in those countries where reactionary elements are just waiting for revenge and restoration of the old regimes. Jews in America will be exposed to a violent wave of antisemitism. So it is of vital interest for the Jews, more than for any other people in the world, to do everything in their power to fight for peace.

Dr. Velebit expressed the hope that if a Jewish state is established in Palestine, it will have every opportunity to develop favourable trade relations with Yugoslavia, our economies being complementary. He was satisfied with the results already achieved in this respect by the Yugoslav trade delegation, which recently visited Palestine.

He also expressed the hope that the Yugoslav member of the UN Special Committee of Enquiry would be of help to us.[2] The Yugoslav government, after receiving the report from its committee member, will study it on its own merits, but we may be confident that the general policy on the Palestine

1. Several words are missing in the original.
2. Yugoslavia was represented on UNSCOP by Jože Brilej, director of the Political Department in the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His alternate was V. Simic. Both representatives expressed sympathy for the Zionist cause but in the end supported the federative, pro-Arab, solution.

question, as already stated by the Slav bloc, will remain essentially the same as at the conclusion of the Special Session of the UN General Assembly.

Dr. Velebit went on to say that he would be very glad to help us in whatever respect possible when our delegate or delegates visit Beograd [Belgrade] before the September session. He assured me that his assistance will not be limited to the formalities alone, but he would be ready to really help us where he can. He is returning to his country sometime next week.

88
I.N. Bakulin to A.Ia.Vyshinskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.10, P.5, D.3. LL.1–8
Moscow, 30 July 1947
Secret

CONCERNING THE UPCOMING DISCUSSION OF THE PALESTINE QUESTION AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION IN SEPTEMBER 1947

1. *Background*[1]

Until World War I, Palestine was part of the Ottoman Empire.

In 1919, in order to instigate the Arabs to revolt against Turkey, the British government, in secret talks with Husayn, the Sherif of Mecca, promised that, after the end of the war, an independent Arab state which would include Palestine would be created.

In May 1916 Britain and France concluded an agreement (Sykes–Picot) according to which, after the end of the war, Palestine was to be given over to international rule. The form of government was to be determined by agreement between Russia, Britain and France; the Palestinian ports of Haifa and Acre were to be given to Britain.

On 2 November 1917, wishing to secure the support of the influential Jewish bourgeoisie of Europe and the US in reinforcing Britain's control over Palestine, which was occupied at that time by British forces, the British government published Lord Balfour's Declaration. In it Britain promised to 'view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people'.

In 1920 the British succeeded in receiving the mandate for Palestine; this was confirmed by the League of Nations on 24 June 1922.

Under the mandate, Britain received 'full powers of legislation and of administration' of Palestine, including control over foreign relations, the

1. The first part of this survey is apparently taken in large part from the entry 'Palestine' in the 2nd edition of *Bol'shaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia*, the relevant volumes of which appeared in 1939.

judicial system and the holy places. As part of the mandate, Britain received the right to maintain its troops in Palestine.

The entire legislative and executive power in the country was concentrated in the hands of the British high commissioner. The so-called 'Palestine administration', made up of British officials, functioned under his authority.

According to the 'constitution' of 1922, a legislative council was supposed to be formed in Palestine, but as a result of the Arab boycott of the elections, this measure by the British was not carried out.

The Zionists constituted the basic support of the British colonial domination in Palestine. On the basis of the mandate, the Jewish Agency was formed as a body to assist the Palestine administration in issues related to the organization of a Jewish national home.[2] The Zionists played the main role in it.

The Jewish National Council (Vaad Leumi) was thus formed on the initiative of the British. It was officially recognized as a body of self-government responsible for collecting taxes from the Jews for the upkeep of schools and for communal needs. An Elected Assembly [Assefat Hanivharim][3] was also formed. Under the umbrella of the Zionist Executive, an illegal Jewish army, Hagana (Defence),[4] was formed, numbering up to 80,000 persons. It was used by the British to suppress the Arab national movement. In Montgomery's instructions (published in *Palestine and the Middle East*, 8 September 1946), in connection with the British troops' preparations for operations against the Arab insurgents of 1938, there was direct mention of the creation in Palestine of mixed groups of soldiers and of 'tested local residents'. The instructions recommended Jewish Zionists in this latter capacity.

The economic penetration of Zionist capital undermined the foundations of Arab existence in Palestine, whereas the political privileges given the Zionists impinged upon their national rights and aspirations.

The Zionists' seizure of Arab lands evoked strong protests from the Arabs.

The British took advantage of the struggle between Arabs and Jews in Palestine. Thus, in particular, the powerful anti-British Arab riots in 1929, 1936, and 1939 were suppressed with Jewish assistance.

The Arab uprising in Palestine in 1935 forced the British to enter into talks with the Arabs on constitutional reforms in Palestine. The Zionists, however, disapproved of the British intention of giving the population of Palestine a constitution. In April 1936 a new Arab uprising broke out which in its scale far

---

2. The Jewish Agency for Palestine was established in 1929 and accorded a formal status in the British mandate over Palestine. It was set up to encourage Jewish immigration to Palestine and to assist in close settlement of the land. It also included representatives of Jewish non-Zionist organizations interested in building up Palestine. Its executive, divided between Jerusalem, London and New York, was the main political and economic organ of the Zionist organization and the Palestine Jewish community (the *yishuv*).
3. See Doc. 16, n. 1.
4. The Zionist Executive in Palestine never assumed direct control or command of the Hagana. In 1947 it was subject to a mixed *yishuv* Security Committee representing the Zionist Organization, the Histadrut and various unaffiliated *yishuv* bodies.

exceeded previous anti-British riots. It was supported by the Arabs of other countries and by the Muslims of India.

The disturbances lasted for three years. Arab disturbances in Palestine represented a dangerous threat to British rule in the conditions leading up to World War II. The British were thus forced to reconsider their policy towards the Arabs of Palestine.

By 1937, the British Royal Commission of Lord Peel, which investigated the situation in Palestine, came to the conclusion that the mandate had 'outlived its usefulness' and could no longer assure Britain firm control of Palestine. The Peel Commission recommended that Palestine be partitioned into three parts: British, Jewish and Arab. This proposal was rejected by the Arabs.[5]

Under pressure of the continuing anti-British Arab movement, the British were forced to work out a new course which they formulated in the White Paper of 1939.[6]

In the White Paper of 1939, Britain repudiated exclusive support of the Zionists and tried to establish cooperation with the élite of the Arab national movement. In 1944 Britain promised to halt Jewish immigration to Palestine, and in 19[3]9 it began talks on granting independence to Palestine.

The White Paper of 1939 aroused strong dissatisfaction among Zionists. Beginning with the spring of 1944, this took the form of open armed actions against the British.

This struggle became particularly active after the end of World War II, when the US extended considerable support to the Zionists in their struggle against the British.

In August 1945, Truman demanded the immediate admission into Palestine of 100,000 Jews from Europe. The British refused to grant this request. In this connection, in November 1945 the joint Anglo-American Committee was established. It was entrusted with studying the Palestine question, as well as the Jewish question in Europe, and with bringing its recommendations to the US and British governments.

On 30 April 1946 this committee published its report. It recommended permitting the entry of 100,000 Jews into Palestine. With regard to the state of affairs in Palestine, the committee acknowledged that the country was 'an armed camp' and that, despite the state of siege and the presence of an enormous British army, the disturbances were continuing. The report particularly emphasized the irreconcilable hostility between Arabs and Jews living in Palestine.

The committee recommended retaining the British mandate over Palestine, pending the establishment of trusteeship under the UN.

The recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee evoked dissatisfaction among both Zionists and Arabs.

---

5. See Doc. 31, n. 3.
6. For the immigration restrictions of the White Paper see Doc. 1. n. 7.

On 8 July 1946, talks began in London between US and British government experts in order to work out a specific plan for resolving the Palestine problem on the basis of the Anglo-American Committee's report. Alluding to the hostility between Jews and Arabs, the experts recommended the creation in Palestine of a federation of four regions in which two regions would be governed by the central government (the British) and two would be autonomous Arab and Jewish provinces. The central government would retain all basic governing functions.

The plan for a federation completely suited British interests but evoked American dissatisfaction. Under the pretext of the need to 'reconsider the entire issue', Truman recalled the American experts from London.

In this period Jewish terrorist organizations became markedly more active. The British authorities in Palestine responded with mass repressions against the Jews.

After the collapse of the conference of Anglo-American experts, the Arab countries, on the basis of a decision adopted at a session of the Arab League in Bludan, proposed that Britain begin talks on a way of resolving the Palestine problem.[7] The British accepted the Arab proposal and on 10 September 1946, a special conference on Palestine was convened, with the participation of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Transjordan and Saudi Arabia.[8]

The Jews and Arabs of Palestine refused to participate in the conference.

Having rejected the British plan for a federation, the Arabs offered their plan, which consisted of the following points:

It envisaged the formation at the end of 1948 of a unified independent state with a predominantly Arab population; other nationalities, including Jews, would be granted full rights. According to this plan, a provisional Palestine government was to be formed immediately, with seven Arab and three Jewish ministers. The provisional government would organize elections for a constituent assembly. After the latter would adopt a democratic constitution, elections would be held for a legislative assembly. Based on the size of the Jewish population in Palestine, the Jews would be given approximately one third of the seats in the Palestinian parliament.

The British mandate would cease to be in effect after the appointment of the first head of state.

The Jews rejected both the British federal plan and the Arabs' proposals for setting up an independent Arab state in Palestine. They demanded free immigration of Jews to Palestine, transference of control over immigration to the Jewish Agency, and the creation of an independent Jewish state in Palestine.

Based on Truman's telegram to Attlee in connection with the suspension of the conference's work, the US supported the Jewish Agency's proposal and suggested that Britain permit the entry of 100,000 Jews into Palestine.[9]

---

7. See Doc. 65, and n. 7 there.
8. See Doc. 67, n. 3.
9. See Doc. 71, n. 3.

Under pretext of the need to study the Arab plan for a state structure in Palestine, the British government postponed reopening the conference, first until 16 December and then to 27 January 1947.

On the eve of the renewal of the London Conference on the Palestine issue, the 27th World Zionist Congress was held in Basel. It supported the Jews' demand for free immigration and the creation of an independent Jewish state in Palestine.

In addition to representatives of Arab countries, representatives of the Palestinian Arabs participated in the London Conference, which renewed its work on 27 January 1947.

In the course of the conference, in response to resistance by the delegates from Arab countries to its federal plan, the British suggested the creation in Palestine of two autonomous cantons – Jewish and Arab – which would be subordinated to a tripartite government (Arab–Jewish–British) located in Jerusalem.

The Arabs rejected this British proposal too.

On 14 February, in view of the fact that agreement had not been reached, Mr. Bevin declared that the British government had decided to entrust the Palestine question to the UN.

2. *Study of the Question by the UN Committee*

On 28 April, at the suggestion of the British government, a special session of the UN General Assembly was held. Its task was to set up and instruct a special committee to prepare a report on the Palestine question for consideration at the next session of the Assembly.

It can be concluded from the debates on procedural issues that the US and Britain decided to join efforts not to permit a detailed discussion of the essence of the Palestine question. Evidently, they calculated that while the committee was carrying out its work in Palestine, they would be able to reach an amicable agreement between themselves about the fate of Palestine, and they would try to reconcile the initial positions which they had held prior to UN analysis of the Palestine question.

Neither the British nor the US representative expressed his government's new position at the General Assembly session. Thus, the outside world thought that the British and US positions remained as they had been before the start of the session (see Memorandum 337-BV of 15 April 1947 about the positions of the US, Britain, Arabs and Zionists on the Palestine question).[10]

Only an oblique mention appeared in a letter of [George] Marshall, published in the American press on 6 May, in which he replied to a question as to whether the US planned to take a definite position in the question of trusteeship over Palestine. It was indicated in the reply that this question

10. Doc. 78.

would not arise until some steps were taken to include Palestine in the system of UN trusteeship. At the same time, Marshall stressed that according to Article 77 of the UN Charter, the transference of territories under the mandate of the League of Nations to UN trusteeship was a voluntary rather than automatic act.

The resolution adopted by the Assembly session provided for the appointment of representatives of eleven states to the committee to prepare a report on Palestine for the forthcoming General Assembly session. These states were Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, India, Iran, Holland, Peru, Sweden, Uruguay and Yugoslavia.

After acquainting themselves with the Palestine problem, on 15 June the committee left for Palestine to study the situation on the spot.

A. The Arab position. The Arab Executive Committee in Palestine decided to boycott the UN committee and called upon all Arabs to refuse to give any testimony to committee members.

The UN committee was thus able to obtain testimony only from the Jewish population of Palestine.

The attitude of the Palestinian Arabs to the activity of the UN committee could be judged from the remarks in the Arab press by leaders of Palestinian Arabs and Arabs of other countries, which came down to a demand to terminate the British mandate over Palestine, grant it independence and halt Jewish immigration.

Judging by the statement of Syria's President Shukri al-Quwwatli published in the newspaper *Orient* on 21 July 1947, the representatives of Arab countries completely shared the opinion of Palestinian Arabs and would continue to oppose the partition of Palestine and the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine.[11]

Representatives of Arab countries presented a memorandum to the UN committee in Beirut on 22 July in which they contended that the sole correct solution to the Palestine question was the formation of a free government in Palestine on the basis of proportional representation.

B. The Jews' position. In its statements to the UN committee, the Jewish Agency demanded the formation in Palestine of a Jewish state which would have the unlimited right to receive Jewish immigrants from other countries into Palestine.

The chairman of the executive committee of the Jewish Agency, Ben-Gurion, proposed a plan to the UN committee which envisaged the creation of a Jewish state in all of Palestine, the abolition of the British White Paper of 1939 and the encouragement of a Jewish–Arab alliance. Ben-Gurion declared that the Jewish Agency would be implacably opposed to any decrees concerning the formation of a bi-national state or the establishment of a British or UN mandate over Palestine.

---

11. See Doc. 89.

3. *Our Position*

The position of the Soviet Union on the Palestine question was presented by Comrade Gromyko at the First Special Session of the UN General Assembly of 14 May 1947.[12]

On this basis, during the discussion of the Palestine question at the forthcoming Assembly session, we must:

1. Attain abolition of the mandate system of administering Palestine as unjustified.

2. Attain the withdrawal of British forces from Palestine because otherwise it would be impossible to create an independent state in Palestine.

3. Support the idea of creating an independent dual democratic Arab–Jewish state based on granting equal rights to the Jewish and Arab populations.

4. If it becomes clear during the discussion of the Palestine question that relations between Arabs and Jews have deteriorated to the point that they could not coexist peacefully in a dual democratic state, then support should be given to the creation of two independent states, Arab and Jewish.

5. If a proposal is made for the Assembly to discuss the resettlement of 100,000 Jews in Palestine, we should support this proposal.

The above points, defining our attitude towards the Palestine question, were conveyed by Comrade Gromyko.

The need for additional proposals and instructions may arise after the presentation of the report by the UN committee which investigated the situation in Palestine.

Director of the Near East Department
I. Bakulin

12. See Doc. 83.

89
Memorandum of I.N. Bakulin on UNSCOP

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.10, P.5, D.3, LL.9–14
Moscow, 31 July 1947
Secret

CONCERNING THE UN SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE

The Special Committee on Palestine, established in accordance with the resolution of the General Assembly of the UN of 15 May 1947, consists of the representatives of eleven states: Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, India, Iran, the Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, Uruguay and Yugoslavia, with Sandström, Sweden's representative, as chairman.[1]

Among the committee's tasks, as stated in the resolution, are to prepare, for consideration by the next session of the Assembly, a report on the Palestine question, including specific proposals for the solution of the Palestine problem

The UN Committee on Palestine has the widest possible powers for ascertaining and recording facts and investigating all issues connected with the Palestine problem. It has been authorized to receive statements (written or oral) from representatives of the mandatory country, of the peoples of Palestine and of the governments of other countries, paying serious attention to the religious interests of Islam, Judaism and Christianity.

After dealing with procedural matters and becoming acquainted with the material on Palestine, the committee arrived in Palestine on 15 June of this year to fulfil its mission by studying the situation first hand through direct contact with the local Arab and Jewish inhabitants.

While the Assembly was still in session to discuss the Palestine question, the delegates from the Arab countries asked for the agenda to include the issue of revoking the mandate and granting independence to Palestine as an Arab state. Later, when the Palestine Committee's terms of reference were being discussed, the Arabs insisted that they should include investigating the subject of revoking the mandate and should afford [the committee] complete freedom to consider the question of Jewish refugees separately from the Palestine problem. The Assembly rejected these conditions,[2] and the Arabs then expressed their disapproval of the committee.

In accordance with the decision of the Arab Higher Committee, conveyed to the United Nations on 14 June this year, the Palestinian Arabs were forbidden, under threat of being charged with treason, to enter into any sort of contact with the members of the [Palestine] Committee in order to give them information about the Arabs in Palestine. According to the vice-president of the Arab Higher Committee, Jamal al-Husayni, the boycott even extended to

1. See Doc. 84, n. 1.
2. See Doc. 86, n. 7.

public receptions in honour of the committee. Judging by press reports, the boycott was extremely effective and, as Simic, the Yugoslav delegate to the UN Palestine Committee, reported in a telegram to the Yugoslav Foreign Ministry, had been organized by the British in order to hinder the work of the committee and diminish its authority. Another indication that the British wanted to obstruct the committee's investigations can be seen in the fact that the British authorities in Palestine, in spite of the Assembly's resolution on refraining from any activity which could hinder the work of the Palestine Committee, timed the execution of three Jews accused of anti-British sabotage to coincide with the day on which the committee began work in Palestine.[3] This was greeted with a wave of revulsion among the Jewish masses in Palestine, and made it considerably more difficult for the committee to make contact, not only with the Arabs because of their boycott, but also with the Jews. To judge by the reports of Curcija, the secretary of the Yugoslav delegation to the Palestine Committee, the members of the committee, except for the Yugoslavs and a few others, could not have cared less about the work of the committee, and were led on by the British, who by means of various devices and ruses directed its members to carefully coordinated locations, and raised every sort of obstacle to keep the committee from freely visiting Arab settlements. For the most part, the committee was shepherded by British personnel who, at their own discretion, used the need for 'security' to decide who should be given access to the committee. This substantially affected the objectivity of its investigation. While the committee was at work, the Palestine Jews continued their acts of terrorism against the British, and the committee had to approach the underground Jewish terrorist organizations, urging them to respect the international organization and the committee representing it.[4] After that the terrorists stopped their anti-British public statements, but the British continued to handle the visit in such a way as to restrict the committee's activity. The press reported cases in which the British, under the pretext of security, arrested those Jews who, in their view, might give the committee information of an anti-British nature. The committee usually met in closed session, and not much was published about its work, which also made it

3. On 16 June 1947 the Military Court in Jerusalem pronounced death sentences on three Jews – Meir Nakar, Yaacov Weiss and Avshalom Habib – who had participated in the attack on Acre prison in May 1947. Two other participants were sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment. The parents of the three condemned Jews approached UNSCOP with a plea to exert pressure on the Palestine government. After three secret meetings the majority of UNSCOP decided to inform the parents: 'It is beyond the Committee's instructions and function to interfere with the judicial administration in Palestine, but... the matter is being brought to the attention of the proper authorities' (see *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. V, p. 1111). On 13 July 1947 two British sergeants were kidnapped by members of the Irgun Zvai Leumi as hostages for the three young Jews under sentence of death. On 29 July the three Jews were executed; the following day the Irgun members hanged the two British soldiers.
4. On 26 June Swedish chairman of UNSCOP, Alfred Sandström met Menachem Begin, commander of the Irgun Zvai Leumi. Begin reaffirmed the Irgun's opposition to any partition of Palestine and its insistence on the establishment of a Jewish state (see Katz, *Days of Fire*, pp. 159–63).

harder to gain the attention of the broad masses of the Palestinian population in order to obtain the necessary information.

After its visit to Palestine, and when it had studied the report by the British administration on its work in Palestine, the committee heard representatives of the Jewish Agency. From 20 to 24 July, it visited Beirut and Amman, where it heard the testimony of representatives of the Arab countries.

The committee's departure from Palestine was the signal for the Jews to resume anti-British activity. As a result of the subsequent wave of terror, seventy-three British soldiers were killed or wounded from 18 to 25 July alone.[5] The Palestinian Arabs, worried by the increased Jewish activity, have been more and more frequently expressing their indignation and calling for firm action against the Jewish terrorists.

Statements by Jewish Representatives to the United Nations' Committee on Palestine[6]

The Jewish Agency, according to the statement made by Ben-Gurion, the chairman of its Executive Committee, on 4 June, is calling for the creation of a Jewish state including the whole of Palestine, the abandonment of the British White Paper of 1939, which restricted Jewish immigration to Palestine, and the encouragement of an Arab-Jewish alliance. Ben-Gurion describes this plan as the basis for the restoration of liberty in Palestine, justice for the Jewish people, and stable progress and prosperity in the Middle East. In another statement Ben-Gurion said that the Jewish Agency would oppose uncompromisingly any measure concerned with the formation of a bi-national state or the establishment of a British or United Nations mandate in Palestine.

The World Jewish Congress endorsed the Jewish Agency's demands (see the letter from Wise, the president of the Congress, to the secretariat of the UN Committee on Palestine).

The Jewish terrorist organization Irgun declared its rejection of any solution to the Palestine problem involving partition, and put forward the following demands:

1. Britain must evacuate its troops from Palestine, and must renounce its indirect rule in Transjordan. 2. A provisional Jewish government must be formed without delay. 3. This government must organize the repatriation of Jews. 4. A general election must be held immediately in Palestine. 5. There must be an international loan to raise the standard of living of the Palestinian population.

---

5. The Irgun Zvai Leumi directed its activities mainly against the military, attacking convoys. They also demolished bridges and damaged the Mosul-Haifa oil pipeline. The Hagana targeted its attacks against British installations designed to fight Jewish illegal immigration, attacking radar and wireless stations and damaging the British ship *Empire Life Guard*.
6. For these statements and documents see *GA OR, Second Session,* supplement No. 11, *United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, Report to the General Assembly,* Vol. III.

The Anglo-Jewish Association sent the United Nations Committee a memorandum saying that it saw no satisfactory alternative to the partition of Palestine, but that the partition 'must be in a form that did not necessarily mean breaking all links between the various regions'.

The secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Palestine, Shmuel Mikunis, in a statement to the committee on 13 June, described British rule in Palestine as a 'bloody colonial regime', and called for the immediate evacuation of British troops from Palestine and the creation of 'an independent democratic Palestinian state'.

Another member of the Communist Party of Palestine,[7] addressing the committee, stated that 'Palestine must cease to serve as a military camp for the imperialist army'.

The Jewish underground organization Stern[8] stated that it would offer military cooperation if the United Nations decided to create an independent Jewish state in Palestine.

The underground army of Palestine, Hagana, announced that it was strong enough to challenge any anti-Zionist policy in Palestine. 'If need be', their memorandum says, 'we shall use force'.

The president of the Palestinian organization Ihud, Dr. Leon Magnes, addressed the committee with a request to allow the immediate admission to Palestine of 100,000 Jews located at present in DP camps in Europe and declared himself opposed to the plan for partition of Palestine, describing it as a major disaster for both Arabs and Jews.

The Zionist Revisionist Party called for the creation of an independent Jewish state, the restoration of the historic frontiers of Palestine between the Mediterranean and the Arabian desert, including Transjordan, the annulment of the British Mandate for Palestine and the evacuation of British troops and the British administration from the country.

The representatives of the League for Arab–Jewish Rapprochement stated that the Palestine problem could be resolved only by taking account of the political aims of both Arabs and Jews, which would be satisfied if a single binational state was created in Palestine.

The Universal League of Peace presented a memorandum to the United Nations Committee calling for the creation of an independent Jewish state on the territory at present colonized by the Jews, with Jerusalem as its centre. 'The rest', according to the memorandum, 'must remain for five years under United Nations Mandate, with permission for Jewish colonization... so that by the end of that period this part of Palestine should also be joined with the Jewish state.'

Arab Statements

The Arab Executive Committee, as mentioned above, decided to boycott the UN Committee, and called on all Arabs not to make any statements to

---

7. The identity of this person is not clear. Apart from Shmuel Mikunis, the committee was addressed on behalf of the communists by Meir Wilner and Wolf Ehrlich.
8. See Doc. 43, n. 3.

members of the committee. The attitude of the Palestinian Arabs to the activity of the United Nations Committee on Palestine can best be understood from the utterances of their leaders and of other Arabs as reported in the Arab press. These boil down to a demand for an end to the British Mandate for Palestine, which should be given independence, and a halt to Jewish immigration to Palestine. The representatives of the Arab countries, to judge from the statement by Shukri al-Quwwatli, the Syrian president, published in the journal *Orient* on 21 July, fully share the Palestinian Arabs' view, and will oppose the partition of Palestine and the creation of a Jewish state in its territory.

In the Arab representatives' opinion, as expressed in a memorandum presented on behalf of the Arab countries to the United Nations Committee in Beirut on 22 July,[9] the only proper solution to the Palestine problem would be the formation of a free government in Palestine on the basis of proportional representation.

The vice-chairman of the Arab Executive Committee in Palestine, Jamal al-Husayni, in a conversation with the BBC correspondent Nixon,[10] expressed displeasure at British indulgence towards Jewish terrorists and said that if the United Nations decision was unfavourable to the Arabs, they would take action against it with all the means at their disposal.

At a meeting of Arabs in Haifa on 6 July, Jamal al-Husayni called on the Arabs to rise in revolt 'if Britain and the United Nations do not give the Arabs their legal rights'.

At a press conference on 5 July, Emil Touma, the official representative of the League for the National Liberation of Palestine, stated that his group rejected the proposal for partition of Palestine, and supported the Arab boycott of the United Nations Committee on Palestine.

Tu'ma attacked the Zionists and said that the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine would be used as a base for Anglo-American imperialism, 'which intends to crush the Arab countries and to foist reactionary plans on them, such as the project for a 'Greater Syria' and the 'Eastern bloc'.

They would also provoke war against the New Democracies and the Soviet Union.

Conclusions

Statements made by the representatives of the Jewish people on the Palestine question suggest that they want to organize a Jewish state in Palestine with unlimited rights of immigration for Jews from other countries. Only part of the Jewish population expresses some doubt about the possibility of solving the Palestine problem by creating a single Arab–Jewish state on the basis of mutual respect and cooperation.

---

9. Arab leaders met UNSCOP in Lebanon on 22 July. In the course of the meeting the committee was addressed by Riyad al-Sulh and Hamid Franjiyeh, foreign minister of Lebanon (see n. 6, above, Vol. III, pp. 240–6).
10. John Nixon was serving as correspondent of the BBC in Jerusalem.

The Arabs, for their part, do not accept the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine but call for the formation of a free government, based on proportional representation of all nationalities and religious groups.

Director of the Near East Department
I. Bakulin

90
E. Epstein to the Jewish Agency Executive

COPY: CZA S25/9299
[Washington] 31 July 1947
Confidential

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH MR. MIKHAIL S. VAVILOV, FIRST SECRETARY OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON.

Mr. and Mrs. Vavilov dined the other evening at our home, enabling me to discuss the Palestine situation at greater length than was possible previously on more formal occasions. Mr. Vavilov has been attached to the Soviet embassy staff in Washington for a good many years and is in charge of their press and public relations. It is his duty to inform Moscow, among other things, about events in Jewish public life in this country. He has many contacts in Jewish circles in New York and has considerable background knowledge about American Jewry.

Most of the conversation, during dinner and afterwards, revolved around life in Palestine in the social, economic and cultural fields; both Mr. and Mrs. Vavilov showed a great interest in the subject and asked many questions.

Mr. Vavilov mentioned that conditions in Palestine are well known in Moscow and that it was only after a careful and comprehensive analysis of the situation that Gromyko had been authorized to make his statement at the Special Session of the UN General Assembly. The Soviet government understands the Jewish desire, as well as the necessity, for statehood, and our work in Palestine has convinced them that we are capable of achieving it. The Soviet government has no self-interest in Palestine, and in supporting the Jewish case they are not motivated by any selfish reasons. They are well aware that the social and economic structure of the *yishuv* is a capitalistic one and that our social experiments in collectivism have nothing to do with the Marxist interpretation of collectivism. They believe, however, that we are building a peaceful, democratic and progressive community in Palestine which can block anti-Soviet intrigues, so easily hatched among the reactionary circles ruling the Arab countries at present.

Also Palestine is apparently the only solution for the homelessness of the Jewish DPs in Europe. Mr. Vavilov illustrated the failure of finding a home for the DPs outside of Palestine by referring to the Stratton bill, which has been put in cold storage by Congress probably for a long time to come.[1]

He went on to say that the Soviet government was satisfied with the reaction of the Jewish public here, in Palestine, and all over the world with Mr. Gromyko's statement.[2] He had sent a large number of clippings to Moscow from the Jewish press in the US praising the Soviet government and Mr. Gromyko for the position taken on the Palestine question and had written several reports on the subject on the basis of conversations he had with a number of Jewish leaders in this country. He had come to the conclusion that the vast majority of the Jews in America are either Zionists or sympathetic to Zionism, and that support for the Jewish struggle in Palestine is not limited to any particular group, organization, or party among the Jews in America. He ridiculed the 'vicious propaganda' of some anti-Soviet circles in the US, including Jewish circles, that Mr. Gromyko's statement did not intend to help the Jews but was the springboard for an attack on the British, intended to cause further trouble for the British and American governments with the Arabs rather than help the Jews. If this were indeed the case, Mr. Gromyko would not have had to come out in support of Jewish statehood and to commit the Soviet government to a definite policy in this respect. Furthermore, the British have enough troubles in the Middle East and elsewhere, making it hardly necessary for the Soviet Union to exert itself on this score!

Although Mr. Vavilov listened attentively when I brought up the arguments against a bi-national state in Palestine, he was reluctant to express any views in favour of partition – the second alternative mentioned in Gromyko's statement. He remarked, however, that the problem of partition will be as carefully studied as the problem of a bi-national state, and priority will be given to that solution which appears to be most realistic and constructive. Mr. Vavilov suggested that we supply them with all the material published by us in this country, which will be duly transmitted to Moscow.

---

1. A bill submitted to the House of Representatives by Representative William Stratton in June–July 1947, calling for the admission of 400,000 refugees from Europe beyond the normal immigration quotas. The legislative process continued for more than a year, and the act, which was eventually passed in June 1948, contained paragraphs discriminating against Jewish immigrants.
2. Cf. Doc. 83.

91
E. Epstein to the Jewish Agency Executive

COPY: ISA 93.02/172/18
[Washington] 11 September 1947
Confidential

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH MR. MIKHAIL S. VAVILOV, FIRST SECRETARY OF THE EMBASSY OF THE USSR, WASHINGTON, DC

On September 2nd Mr. Vavilov invited me for luncheon at the Soviet embassy. Upon my arrival there, he introduced me to Mr. Iurii M. Bruslov, second secretary of the embassy, who later joined us.

Mr. Vavilov, whom I had met previously,[1] informed me that he had been appointed a member of the Soviet delegation to the UN General Assembly and had been instructed to collect all available data on Palestine. Although he assumed that his government in Moscow was in possession of all the material we had submitted to the UNSCOP, he wanted to have another set for reference at Lake Success. I promised to supply him with a copy of all memoranda and statements presented to the UNSCOP by the Agency although we ourselves were unfortunately short of much of this material.

Mr. Vavilov then passed on to the UNSCOP reports on Palestine and asked me about our opinion on the majority and minority recommendations.[2] I explained our attitude towards the two reports of the UNSCOP and added that we had been sorry to find that the Yugoslav member had signed the minority report, as this meant complete surrender of Jewish rights to the Arab majority in the proposed federated state, notwithstanding the obvious attempt to camouflage this fact by misleading terminological reference to a 'Jewish state'. I went on to say that we understood Mr. Gromyko's suggestion of a bi-national state to imply complete equality between the Jewish and Arab peoples in Palestine, and that under the constitutional scheme of the minority report such equality was jeopardized.

Mr. Vavilov interrupted me at this point to say that although the Yugoslav member had voted for the minority report, the Czechoslovak member had joined the majority, a fact revealing the freedom which had governed the decisions of the two governments in the Palestine question. He said, in no ambiguous terms, that the position of the Soviet government, as expressed by Mr. Gromyko, remained the same without any changes or alterations, and that the Soviet delegation would act according to the principles set forth by

1. See Doc. 90.
2. UNSCOP published its recommendations on 31 August 1947. The committee recommended unanimously that Palestine be granted independence as soon as possible. As for the form of government, opinions differed. The majority recommended that the country be partitioned into an Arab state, a Jewish state and an international zone in Jerusalem, the Arab and the Jewish states to cooperate with each other within the framework of an economic union. The minority suggested establishing a federal state.

Mr. Gromyko. There were, however, many practical aspects of the Palestine settlement which were of great interest to the Soviet government and he would very much like to know our attitude towards these matters. The USSR was interested, for example, in knowing the attitude of the Jews in America towards the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. In reply, I described the state of affairs in Jewish life in this country as far as Palestine was concerned, mentioning the history of the Balfour Declaration and the role that American Jewry had played in its issue. I further mentioned the organization of the Jewish Agency in 1939 with the active participation of the Jewish non-Zionist leadership in the US; the Biltmore Program adopted by the vast majority of Jewish organizations in America; the American Jewish Labor Council, which cooperates with 150 labour organizations to help the Zionist cause; and finally the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry which also brought the American Jewish Committee to support most of the Zionist demands in Palestine.[3] I further mentioned the role of the Yiddish press and concluded by saying that, except for a small group headed by Lessing Rosenwald[4] and a few members of the Polish Bund who had found refuge in this country, there was practically no organized opposition to Zionism or to the establishment of the Jewish state in Palestine among the five million American Jews.

Mr. Vavilov then asked about the attitude of the non-Jewish American public to Zionism and the Jewish state in Palestine. I again had to make an excursion into history, starting with President Wilson and ending with the statement by President Truman on 4 October 1946.[5] I referred to the joint resolutions of the US Congress of 1922 and 1945 in support of the Jewish national home in Palestine, as well as the most recent resolutions on Palestine taken by both the Democratic and Republican Parties at their respective national conventions in 1944.

I devoted special attention to the support which Zionism had found among the labour movement in this country and the help which we had received on important occasions from the CIO and AFL executives and their affiliated bodies.[6] In conclusion I mentioned the support which, with relatively few exceptions, the Zionist cause has received from the general American press and radio, and especially emphasized the values of this support during the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Palestine.

Mr. Vavilov and Mr. Bruslov interrupted me several times to inquire whether one paper or another was more friendly to us, whether we had more support from the CIO than from the AFL, which of the leaders were particularly friendly

3. The American Jewish Committee, representing the traditionally anti-Zionist Jewish community in the US, gradually changed its position on the Palestine issue beginning summer 1946 and endorsed the UNSCOP majority recommendations.
4. In 1943 Lessing Julius Rosenwald founded the American Council for Judaism which led an active campaign against the establishment of a Jewish political entity in Palestine or elsewhere.
5. See Doc. 71, n. 3.
6. The Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and the American Federation of Labor (AFL) both endorsed and supported the Zionist demands for statehood during the session of the UN General Assembly in the autumn of 1947.

to us, whether the general American support of the Zionist cause was stronger in the East than in the West, etc.

When Mr. Vavilov asked me about the reaction of the American press towards the recommendations of the UNSCOP, I called his attention to the editorials in the leading papers in New York and Washington which, on the whole, supported the majority report and called for more active American participation in carrying out its recommendations. I cited Mr. Arthur Krock's[7] article of that day as a significant example of the rather new attitude adopted by a paper which had for years either avoided a discussion of Palestine or had written about Palestine in a spirit of strong opposition to the essentials of Zionism and the Jewish national home.

In conclusion, Mr. Vavilov asked me what kind of relations I visualized between the Jewish state in Palestine and the USSR. In my reply I mentioned that the major interests of the Jewish state must necessarily include social and economic development and the maintenance of peace. For geographic, economic and political reasons the establishment of satisfactory relations with the USSR must obviously be a matter of prime concern to the Jewish state. The relative proximity of the USSR to Palestine and the possibilities of a mutually advantageous economic interchange must inevitably lead the Jewish state to seek the establishment of relations of amity and mutual understanding with the Soviet Union. I mentioned the spirit of friendship towards the Russian people which had found expression in the activities of the V League, as well as the appreciation recorded by the Jewish public and press in Palestine after Mr. Gromyko's statement at the Special Session of the UN General Assembly.

In conclusion I mentioned that the structure of the Jewish community was that of a western democracy and was likely to remain such. At the same time its outlook would be progressive and its aim those of construction and development. The perpetuation of the misery, disease, and squalor of the countries of the Middle East could be neither a Jewish nor a Russian interest. In helping the regeneration of the region in which they had come to live, the Jews of Palestine would make a contribution to the benefit of all. The Zionist vision of the Middle East was based on three conceptions: equality of independence, social reform, and international cooperation. These ideas we believed to be wholly in accord with the interests of the Soviet Union and with its desire and hopes for the area.

At the end of the luncheon Mr. Vavilov asked me whether I would be able to present him with a short memorandum which would contain the main points of our discussion, namely, the analyses of the majority and minority reports, Jewish reaction to the report, [the] general American reaction, and the possible relations of the Jewish state with the USSR. This report was later prepared by Mr. Arthur Lourie and submitted to Mr. Vavilov together with other material relating to the UNSCOP.

---

7. Arthur Krock, a senior journalist on the staff of the *New York Times*, known for his generally unsympathetic attitude to Zionism.

92
E. Epstein's Memorandum of a Conversation with S.K. Tsarapkin (New York, 19 September 1947)

COPY: ISA 93.03/92/35

[...][1]

2. Mr. Epstein also saw Mr. Vavilov, who told him that their representative on the Palestine Committee would be Mr. Tsarapkin, minister of the Soviet embassy. He later introduced Epstein to Tsarapkin. He said that he was talking to him in the light of Mr. Gromyko's speech. It was as much in Russia's interest as in our own that we achieve independence in Palestine. We were much disturbed by the attitude of the Yugoslavs in the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine,[2] and Mr. Epstein expressed anxiety that Russia would vote for the minority report. To this Mr. Tsarapkin responded 'not necessarily'. He listened carefully to all Mr. Epstein had to say but was, in general, non-committal.

[...]

93
A. Levavi to G. Meyerson (Jerusalem)

COPY: CZA S25/486
Jerusalem, 23 September 1947

Following consultation with Mr. H. Berman, I met on Monday, 22 September, with Mr. Viktor Khangulov of the Soviet legation in Beirut. I first met Mr. Khangulov a few months ago, during his previous visit to Palestine.[1]

At the outset of our conversation, Kh[angulov] thanked me for the book I had sent him at his request (a collection of articles on Greater Syria published by the Transjordan government). I noted that since our last talk important political events had transpired in connection with Palestine, particularly the articulation of Soviet policy in Gromyko's speech. He confirmed this and immediately mounted a counter-attack, saying that he would like to hear our assessment of Rabbi Silver's declaration that Soviet support is disastrous for the

---

Doc. 92

1. The document is published in its entirety in *The Political Documents of the Jewish Agency*, Vol. II, No. 337, pp. 674–6.
2. See Doc. 91.

Doc. 93

1. No details of previous visit by Khangulov to Palestine have been traced.

Jewish cause. I replied that to the best of my knowledge this was a distortion of what Rabbi Silver had said. In any event, such remarks should be taken as no more than a personal statement. American Zionism includes diverse streams from all segments of the Jewish public there; even the Jewish Communists in America take a far more positive stand towards the Zionist idea than the Palestine Communist Party. Clearly such statements cannot reflect the position of world Zionism, much less the position of the *yishuv* in Palestine. Here we briefly discussed the Republican Party and the Democratic Party in the United States, and 'we agreed' that since Roosevelt's death it had been difficult to tell them apart.

I told Mr. Khangulov that one of the evening papers had described him as an 'emissary of Armenian Zionism'.[2] He laughed and asked whether this was not the handiwork of Mr. Svet, who had visited him the day before. I explained to him that Mr. Svet was a serious journalist who did not crave sensational headlines and was not employed by that evening paper. Mr. Khangulov then explained that his connection with the Armenian issue was coincidental and that he was a diplomatic representative of the USSR having no special connection to the Armenian question. Returning to the main topic of our conversation, I said I had a bone to pick with him. Since Gromyko's speech we were becoming increasingly convinced that the USSR was not ignoring the rights of the Jews and was seeking a solution which would be fair to both peoples. In various talks which had been held in the meantime in the United States and elsewhere, it was confirmed to us that the line expressed in Gromyko's speech was the established political stance on the Palestine question. Kh[angulov], who had been nodding his head in assent throughout my remarks, stopped me here to ask: 'Have meetings in fact already been held in the United States?' I confirmed this and said that among the questions our representatives had been asked were: Why do we prefer the majority plan of the UN Committee to the minority plan? What is the position of Jewish and general public opinion in the United States regarding Zionism? And how do we see relations between the Soviet Union and a Jewish state if it is established?

I went on to say that although welcome exchanges such as these were taking place elsewhere, in the Near East we were unable to forge normal ties, and this generated misapprehension and insecurity among the public. There was no Soviet representation in Palestine and it was difficult for us to get to Lebanon. The legation in Egypt was surrounded by surveillance and espionage (Kh[angulov]'s comment: 'Very true'). While representatives of the USSR did visit Palestine, we learned of this only accidentally, from the press, and sometimes not even that. I gave him an example of an undesirable outcome: A few weeks ago the Husaynis' paper *al-Wahada* published a report about a promise made by the director of the Information Bureau at the Soviet legation in Beirut,

2. Khangulov was apparently involved in the mass repatriation of Armenians from Turkey to the USSR that took place in 1947 (see Ro'i, *Soviet Decision Making in Practice*, p. 59).

namely that the Soviet bloc, together with the Muslim countries – fifteen or more in number – would fight the solution being proposed by the [UNSCOP] Committee at the UN. We conjectured that this report was no more than a provocation, but there was no one to ask, and the ordinary reader could only wonder: on the one hand, there is Gromyko's declaration, but on the other, there is a report like this.

Kh[angulov] here launched into a rather lengthy speech on the character of Russian diplomacy. He emphasized that it was open diplomacy, and that I should understand the principle that under no circumstances would they engage in schemes or take action which was not completely consistent with their most official public declarations. 'Even the Americans say that it is enough to read *Izvestiia* and *Pravda* to know what Gromyko's position will be on a given question. Perhaps this is not always a successful tactic, but it is our way and we will follow it in every matter.' As for the specific report, I was correct to conjecture that it was merely a worthless provocation. There were only two Soviet representatives in Beirut with the authority to issue such a statement. They are Mr. Solod, the Soviet minister, and he, Khangulov, himself. In addition, there is also Mr. Podvigin in Beirut, but he is a consul and his task is to deal solely with matters such as passports, citizenship, and the like, at most, also with VOKS (shipments of literature and magazines). They have a chargé d'affaires in Damascus who is subordinate to the legation in Beirut, which is currently responsible for both countries (during this whole description Kh. did not define his title or role, other than to reiterate several times that he was a diplomatic – not a consular – representative and that the press here always got his title wrong). Naturally, not one of the people he mentioned had issued a statement such as was reported in *al-Wahada*. K then said that, speaking frankly, the reason he refrained from meeting with official personalities from the *yishuv* was that he had had a bitter experience. He had held such talks but they had been reported in a completely distorted and erroneous manner. I did not want to ask him straightforwardly which talks he was referring to, but I did note that to the best of my knowledge he had not met with authorized representatives of the Jewish Agency, and that the conversation with Mrs. G. Meyerson, which had been agreed upon at our previous meeting, had not yet taken place. He then asked me how I envisaged the substance of the meetings I was proposing. He was ready to hold them provided it were understood that they must not be publicised and that their character must be absolutely 'personal and fraternal'. I agreed to his conditions and mentioned several subjects: the issue of Greater Syria, which is of interest to both them and us (this topic did not seem to please him), the possible outcome of the discussions at the UN General Assembly – clearly caution must be exercised and the British will try to complicate matters in order to maintain the status quo, but it should not be thought that the status quo will last indefinitely (he agreed with my conjecture), the question of cultural and economic relations, which the V League is unable to implement to any great degree despite its good intentions, and so on.

Here we exchanged brief remarks about the V League. He claimed that the league saw its role as having concluded with the end of the war. I defended the league a little. We returned to the subject of our conversation: He promised to inform me of every future visit. He would like to meet with Mrs. Meyerson on his next visit here. He heard that she was about to resign and that she had conducted lengthy talks with the high commissioner.[3] I replied that these things were in no way connected and that the reports about her resignation were unsubstantiated. I briefed him about terrorism (our opposition to terrorism, on the one hand, our refusal to 'collaborate' with the authorities, on the other) and about *aliya*, the *Exodus*[4] and youth immigration. I noted that the Palestine government was not authorized to conduct negotiations on major policy issues. He said he had read about the *Exodus* and the children's immigration in our bulletin.[5] I asked him for his opinion of the bulletin and he replied that he had especially enjoyed bulletin no. 13, which contained nothing superfluous and furnished a great deal of informative material, especially a summary of the UN Committee's decisions. We agreed that we could not expect a report of the Committee on Palestine every two weeks so that we could summarize it in the bulletin. He wanted to know whether Mrs. Meyerson spoke Russian – his knowledge of English was very limited. I said that I would be present during the conversation, so that the linguistic barrier would be overcome.

We spoke briefly about the Russian ships *Rossiia* and *Pobeda* (*Pobeda* will transport the Armenians when they are able to leave; the government had promised to facilitate their departure and the transfer of their property, but he was not sure the promise would be honoured).[6]

Following a few remarks about Soviet literature, etc., he asked me what my position was in the Jewish Agency. I told him that I worked in the Political Department, which dealt with foreign affairs. I was the deputy director of the school for our 'diplomats'[7] and specialized in Soviet affairs: edited the bulletin, read their press and literature, and tried – so far with little success – to maintain normal relations with the Soviet representatives in this part of the world. He showed an interest in the school and afterwards noted that the desired relations would undoubtedly be established in time. At the end of the conversation, as I was about to take my leave, he asked if I could provide him with a memorandum on the political parties in the *yishuv* and on the illegal organizations (as an example of illegal organizations he mentioned Lehi). He

---

3. Khangulov's remark regarding Meyerson's intention to resign is not borne out by Zionist records.
4. On 20 July the immigrant ship *Exodus*, with 4,550 immigrants on board, was seized in Haifa and its passengers were deported back to Europe.
5. See Doc. 161.
6. Tens of thousands of Armenians with Soviet citizenship were 'repatriated' to Soviet Armenia in the years 1945–47 as part of a campaign by the Soviet government.
7. Reference is to the Jerusalem Public Service School that functioned from 1946 to 1948. The graduates of this school were trained to enter the Jewish Agency and *yishuv* public service bodies.

was not asking me to give away secrets (here we smiled at each other like two burglars), but they lacked consolidated, objective information. He would like to have the material in Russian. I expressed my readiness to prepare the material and asked how to get it to him. After repeated hesitations he asked whether we could forward the memorandum in a sealed envelope addressed to him at the Yugoslav consulate in Jerusalem. As I was leaving, Manya Shohat[8] entered (apparently on behalf of the V League). She did not consult with us in advance about calling on him and we have not been apprised about the content of their conversation.

I am preparing the memorandum according to Kh[angulov]'s request.

94
V.M. Molotov to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (New York)[1]

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.18, P.17, D.116, L.101
Moscow, 30 September 1947
Top Secret/Top Priority

Don't oppose the majority opinion[2] on the issue of the partition of Palestine. On the remaining [matters], we agree with your proposals.

Confirm receipt.[3]

Molotov

Doc. 93

8. Manya Shohat was a founding member of the V League.

Doc. 94

1. Vyshinskii was head of the Soviet delegation to the Second Session of the UN General Assembly that opened on 23 September. The Palestine issue was one of the items on the agenda of this session. At the beginning of the discussions it was decided that, owing to the complexity and importance of the Palestine issue, it would be referred to a special ad hoc committee, on which all member states would be represented. This committee convened for its first meeting on 25 September.
2. It is clear that Vyshinskii had inquired as to his superiors' attitude to the UNSCOP recommendations. On the UNSCOP Committee recommendations, see Doc. 91, n. 2.
3. Six copies were made of this telegram. The first was sent to Stalin, the second was kept by Molotov, two copies were preserved in the Tenth Department (coding) and two copies were filed. The following persons were acquainted with the contents of this telegram: Malik (deputy foreign minister), Vinogradov (director of the Department of UN Affairs), Golunskii (director of the Legal Department), Kozyrev (director of the First European Department) and Bakulin (director of the Middle East Department).

95
V.M. Molotov to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (New York)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.18, P.17, D.116, L.109
Moscow, 30 September 1947
Top Secret/Top Priority

Further to our No. 106.[1]

Keep in mind that in the directive to Gromyko with which you are familiar,[2] we were motivated by tactical considerations in suggesting the first option for the solution of the Palestine question – the creation of a dual state. We did not want to take the initiative[3] in the creation of a Jewish state, but the second option of the above-mentioned directive, the creation of an independent Jewish state, better conveys our position. Since after the inquiry, the majority of the UN Committee spoke in favour of the creation of a separate Jewish state, you should support this majority opinion, which corresponds to our basic position on this issue.

Confirm receipt.[4]

Molotov

96
A.Ia. Vyshinskii to V.M. Molotov (Moscow)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059. OP.18, P.41, D.301, LL.351–2
New York, 15 October 1947
Top Secret/Top Priority

To Molotov,

Our statement on Palestine was well received by the Jews.[1] The Arabs were disappointed, although after Gromyko's speech at the emergency session, they had little hope of a change in our position. Before Tsarapkin spoke, the Syrian told him that if the Assembly decided to adopt the Special Committee's report as its basis, they would then be inclined to stick with the minority plan; the majority plan is absolutely unacceptable to the Arabs.

Doc. 95

1. Doc. 94.
2. Regarding his speech at the first Special Session of the General Assembly, see Docs. 83 and 99.
3. The original text, crossed out by Molotov read: 'It was inexpedient for us to take the initiative...'
4. The distribution of this document as in Doc. 94, n. 3.

Doc. 96

1. On 13 October 1947, the Soviet representative to the Ad Hoc Committee, S. Tsarapkin, laid down the Soviet position on Palestine supporting the UNSCOP majority recommendation.

Although the Arabs are dissatisfied with our position, at the committee session they directed their criticism mainly at the Americans. They were particularly angered by the American proposal to create volunteer police units to maintain order in Palestine during the transition period. Johnson expressed satisfaction that the Soviet position on the Palestine question was quite similar to the American one.[2] The press also noted this and wrote favourably about our statement.

On 14 October, the Yugoslav delegate[3] spoke in defence of the minority report, which he helped draw up.[4]

Vyshinskii

97
V.M. Molotov to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (New York)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.18, P.17, D.117, L.60
Moscow, 16 October 1947
Top Secret/Top Priority

First. We agree with your proposals on points 2, 3, and 4. Second. We see no grounds for objecting to the Colombian proposal.[1] It is politically expedient to support this proposal since it envisages, along with permitting 150,000 Jews to immigrate to Palestine, a solution to the general problem of impoverished European Jews. The opinion of the Jews themselves must, however, be clarified. If they are satisfied with the Colombian proposal, then don't object to it.[2]

Please inform about further developments.[3]

Molotov

Doc. 96

2. On 11 October the US representative to the Ad Hoc Committee, Herschel V. Johnson, presented the American position on the UNSCOP recommendations, supporting the majority view.
3. V. Simic.
4. Copies to Stalin, Molotov, Beria, Zhdanov, Malenkov, Mikoian, Voznesenkii, Vyshinskii and Malik.

Doc. 97

1. The Colombian draft resolution (A/AC.14/12) referred to the Jewish DPs in Europe and proposed to establish a special subcommittee which would study the observations and suggestions incorporated in the UNSCOP report.
2. The Colombian draft resolution was discussed at the Ad Hoc Committee on 22 October 1947 and rejected by a vote of 19 to 7 with 10 abstentions.
3. Six copies were made, the first sent to Stalin, the second kept by Molotov, two copies were preserved at the Coding Department and two went to the file. At the bottom of the document the following note is appended: 'Apprise comrades Malik, Vinogradov, Golunskii, Kozyrev and Bakulin.'

98
M. Yuval to D. Ben-Gurion (Jerusalem)

COPY: CZA S25/5353
New York, 26 October 1947
Secret

Present: Mr. S. Tsarapkin, Prof. [B.] Shtein, Mr. M. Shertok, Mr. E. Epstein, Mr. D. Horowitz.

Even though the conversation was held at the suggestion of Mr. Tsarapkin, the Russian representatives nevertheless found it necessary, for some reason, to make it appear as though we had asked for [the meeting], and we had no interest in arguing the point. Opening the conversation, Mr. Tsarapkin said that since the Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine[1] was to hold detailed discussions in the coming days, they wanted to study the issues, and he would like us to present our point of view for their guidance. During the conversation they made no commitment or promise necessarily to accept our precise point of view, but they did display a pronounced desire to learn, and the meeting proceeded as though they were seeking guidance from us. We decided to supply them with alternative solutions to some of the questions, stating openly that we had not yet made a final decision on them. Several times over the past three weeks we had heard reports of a turn for the worse in their position, and that they intended to withdraw their support for the UNSCOP majority recommendations. But we also were told that at one of the meetings of the Slav bloc, when the Palestine question arose, a leading Russian representative reprimanded the representative of Yugoslavia because its delegate on the committee had supported the minority recommendations, saying: 'You have disregarded the catastrophe that befell the Jews in this war and you have forgotten that we owe them a debt.'

The following subjects came up in the conversation:

(1) They noted that the committee was due to decide on 17 proposals and asked about our position. The details were explained and Mr. Shertok summed up by saying that although there might be differences on one point or another, we were interested in the passage of a resolution on two of the proposals:

(a) Adoption of the majority report and appointment of a subcommittee for its implementation.

(b) Immediate *aliya* (Simic's proposal combined with that of Fabregat, and the *Exodus* immigrants);[2] judging by Tsarapkin's summation, the impression is that they agreed with us.

---

1. See Doc. 94, n. 1.
2. Reference is presumably to a suggestion by Rodriguez Fabregat, representative of Uruguay, who proposed during his speech in the Ad Hoc Committee that 30,000 Jewish children survivors be added to the quota of 120,000 persons that had been fixed for the transitional period of two years (see *GA OR, Second Session, Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine, Summary Records of Meetings*, p. 33).

(2) Composition of the sub-committee:[3] Mr. Shertok told them about the report which had reached us concerning the [sub-committee's] make-up, which was causing us some concern (the Big Five, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Brazil, Mexico, Australia, Iceland, and Iraq – and if Iraq refuses, Pakistan and Iran to be appointed in its place). Mr. Shertok said that this composition meant a clear decision in the Arabs' favour; he suggested that they support a resolution stressing that only representatives [of countries] that backed the majority proposals should be members of such a committee. Although they accepted the view that there was no place for a decision in the Arabs' favour, they did not agree that only supporters of the majority proposal and only 'disinterested' states should be on the [sub]-committees.[4]

(3) The border issue.[5] We explained that those who proposed decreasing the territory recommended in the majority program were trying to rationalize the cuts by [citing] the need to reduce the Arab minority in the Jewish state. Yet, they also want to exclude the Negev and [other] areas which are uninhabited or sparsely populated. We explained to them the importance we attach to Galilee, but we did not hide the fact that we may ask to incorporate into the Jewish state only the 370,000 dunams of the 'Lifshitz Plan'.[6] We pointed out that the plan's advantage was that we would receive 250,000 dunams of wasteland and make no claim to Acre. As for Jaffa, we said that we would not ourselves initiate a proposal that it be taken from us, but if pressured we would not resist. The case of Haifa was presented as an example of a Jewish majority administering affairs in cooperation with an Arab minority. Following an explanation of the structure of Jerusalem and its geographic and demographic division, two possibilities were mentioned in addition to the

---

3. After a general and inconclusive discussion in the Ad Hoc Committee it nominated three sub-committees: one to work out a plan for the implementation of UNSCOP's majority recommendations (partition), the other to draft a plan for the creation of a federal state in Palestine, and a third one to work out a compromise solution. The USSR and the US were represented on the first sub-committee.
4. In the end, the first sub-committee (to discuss the majority report) consisted of the USSR and the US, Uruguay, Venezuela, Guatemala, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Canada and South Africa – all supporters of the partition plan.
5. The partition scheme recommended by UNSCOP allocated the Negev to the Jewish state but excluded most of the Galilee. Acre was in the Arab sector, while Jaffa, with a large Arab population, was given to the Jewish state. Zalman Lifshitz, who was the territorial expert on the Jewish Agency delegation, initiated certain revisions to the proposed borders, adding to the Jewish state sparsely populated tracts of land of economic and strategic value (such as a strip of land along the Dead Sea), but excluding Arab Jaffa. For the UNSCOP territorial suggestions and the final partition boundaries as approved by the General Assembly, see maps in *GA OR, Second Session*, supplement No. 11, *United Nations Special Committee on Palestine*, Vol. II, maps; *GA OR, Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine, Summary Records of Meetings*, 25 September–23 November 1947, Appendix I, II.
6. See Lifshitz memorandum of 18 September 1947 entitled 'Remarks toward the Partition Map Proposed by the Majority in UNSCOP', which became known as the 'Lifshitz Plan'. For the text, see *Political Documents of the Jewish Agency*, Vol. 2, pp. 665–9.

current proposal:[7] a triple division of the city, so that in the Jewish section the laws of the Jewish state would apply, and the possibility would exist of expanding the area of the international regime to the west and south in order to include the nine Jewish settlements, and to the east in order to include the potash works and [Kibbutz] Bet Haarava via the desert. It was explained further that here there could be a parallel with Jaffa in terms of free access between the regions.

(4) We explained that we would insist on the full participation of our representatives on the sub-committee, and that we be able to participate in the deliberations not only when we were invited to do so, but whenever we deemed it necessary. They were very understanding of this demand.

(5) Problem of implementation. Following a discussion about the behaviour of the British regarding evacuation and cooperation in handing over [the administration], which remained an unknown factor, we said we would not try to expel them by force of arms, but neither would we try to delay their departure. We think that we will be ready to assume power immediately in the Jewish areas, but that it is essential for the United Nations to appoint an authority which will be empowered to supervise the transfer of power and to ensure that all sides uphold the UN resolutions. Power should pass to Jewish hands in one stage, but if the British cooperate – and we would not oppose that – power will be transferred gradually, but rapidly. As for the security forces, two possibilities can be discussed: establishment of a Jewish force that will be equipped from external sources, or a UN force to operate with Jewish assistance. If the first proposal is accepted, a symbolic, small international unit will be required and a decision will have to be made about which countries it will be recruited from. They raised the question of who should appoint the supervisory body and to which UN committee or body it should be subordinated. We explained that from our point of view it was desirable that this appointment, too, should follow the procedure in dealing with the Palestine question until now – that is, ad hoc bodies or committees. We would not want supervision by the Trusteeship Council, whose composition and institutions were inappropriate to the nature of our problem. The Russians, who are not represented on that council, showed signs of agreement, and Shtein remarked that certainly the terms of reference for dealing with the residents of the island of Samoa were not appropriate in our case. They did not, however, express approval of our proposal for special treatment and sought to ascertain what would be the advantages of such treatment by the Security Council. They reiterated this position when military questions arose, saying that a clear procedure existed according to which military affairs were entrusted to the Security Council. Shertok replied that we do not think that the customary Security Council procedure prevented or contradicted in any form an ad hoc solution for the further handling of the Palestine question. It was obvious that they wanted the question to reach the [Security] Council.

---

7. Of internationalization.

(6) Economic Union.[8] Following a discussion of the details of the recommendation for economic union, we explained that we were not enthusiastic but were ready to accept them.

The conversation concluded with an exchange of declarations. Shertok thanked [them] for acceding to the request to hold the meeting, and Tsarapkin said he hoped this would be the first detailed discussion in a series of talks that would be held in the near future.

99
Memorandum by A. Timofeev

COPY: AVP RF, F.018, OP.9, P.17, D.77, LL.25–8
Moscow, 23 October 1947
Secret

THE PALESTINE QUESTION

On 2 April 1947, the British government asked the secretary-general of the UN to put the Palestine question on the agenda for the next session of the General Assembly, and also to convene a special session in order to set up a committee on the Palestine question.

The governments of Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia asked the secretary-general to include on the agenda of the Special Session the issue of the termination of the British Mandate in Palestine and the declaration of the independence of Palestine.

On 28 April 1947, Comrade Gromyko was sent the basic points for his speech in the Assembly, which were:

1. The mandatory system of government in Palestine, which was set up in 1922, has not passed the test. The British government itself has pronounced the mandate to be unworkable in Palestine.

2. If cancellation of the British Mandate in Palestine is seriously discussed in the Assembly, then speak in principle in favour of abrogation.

3. Note that in the last war the Jewish people experienced unparalleled disaster and suffering. One must take account of the needs of a people which has experienced such suffering.

4. Consider the various projects for meeting Jewish needs, bearing in mind two possible alternatives:

The first would be the creation of a dual Arab–Jewish state with equal rights for Jews and Arabs.

---

8. See Doc. 91, n. 2.

If this proves to be impracticable, in view of the deterioration in Jewish-Arab relations, then the second alternative must be put forward – the partition of Palestine into two independent states – Jewish and Arab.

If in the course of discussion the question of moving 100,000 Jews into Palestine is raised, then support this proposal.

On 28 April 1947, the Special Session of the General Assembly opened in New York devoted to discussion of the Palestine question. Aranha (Brazil) was elected president of the session.

The General Assembly rejected the Arab countries' proposal to cancel the mandate and grant independence to Palestine.

On 15 May the Assembly approved the membership, functions and authority of the committee set up to study the Palestine question.[1]

In the debate in the General Assembly, the USSR delegate alone made a substantive political statement on the Palestine question.[2]

Representatives of Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, India, Iran, the Netherlands, Peru, Switzerland, Sweden, Uruguay and Yugoslavia were elected members of the Special Committee.

The committee presented its report to the UN on 1 September 1947.

The report contained a number of recommendations accepted unanimously by the Special Committee. Among them were the abolition of the mandate; the earliest possible granting of independence to Palestine; the establishment of a period of transition; security for the three religions and the holy places; and others.

A majority of the committee concluded that Palestine should be divided into two states. The basic recommendation corresponds in general with our second alternative: the partition of Palestine into two independent states.

The committee presented two plans for the future government of Palestine:

1. The majority plan (approved by the representatives of Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, Holland, Peru, Sweden, and Uruguay) provides for the partition of Palestine into two independent states, Arab and Jewish, joined together in an economic union. Jerusalem would come under United Nations trusteeship. The independence of the two states would be proclaimed after a transition period of two years. During the transition period, authority would be exercised by Great Britain under United Nations supervision. During this period 150,000 Jews would be allowed to move into the Jewish state. In territorial terms, the following areas would form part of the Jewish state: Eastern Galilee, the plain of Jezreel, the greater part of the coastal plain and the whole of the Beersheba area, including the Negev area. The Arab state would include Western Galilee, the areas of Samaria and Judea, and also the coastal plain from Isdud to the Egyptian frontier.

---

1. Reference is to UNSCOP.
2. For Gromyko's speech in the Special Session, see Doc. 83.

2. The minority plan (approved by Yugoslavia, India and Iran) provides for a single independent federal Palestinian state, consisting of Arab and Jewish states, with the capital at Jerusalem. Responsibility for the government of Palestine in the transition period, which would last three years, would be entrusted to a special body appointed by the General Assembly. The question of Jewish immigration in the transition period would be handed over to the Special Commission of the UN, which would include three Arab and three Jewish representatives.

On 23 September 1947, the agenda of the Second Session of the General Assembly included the Palestine question, which was passed for consideration to an [ad hoc] special committee on Palestine.[3]

The position of the USSR on Palestine.

On 30 September Comrade Vyshinskii was instructed by Comrade Molotov not to raise any objection to the opinion of the majority of the committee on the partition of Palestine.[4] Comrade Molotov also agreed not to object to recommendations passed unanimously by the committee about the mandate, the granting of independence to Palestine, and so on.

On the same day, Comrade Molotov sent our delegation additional instructions on the Palestine question. The essence of these instructions amounted to this: since the majority of the UN committee had, after looking into the matter, come out in favour of the creation of a separate Jewish state, our delegation should support this majority opinion, which corresponded to our basic position on the matter.[5]

As to the discussion of the Palestine question in the Special Committee, Comrade Vyshinskii has asked our opinion about the following: the length of the transition period, Jewish immigration into Palestine during this period, the number of Arabs in the Jewish state, and the statute on Jerusalem.

Our views on these issues are expressed in the instructions sent to Comrade Vyshinskii on 15 October. These are as follows:[6]

1. Jewish opinion must be consulted on all important questions concerning Palestine. In particular, this must be done on the matter of Jerusalem, for which it will be necessary to introduce a special statute which will safeguard the interests of the three religions.

2. We should not be alarmed by a large minority of Arabs in the Jewish state, provided that it is less than 50 per cent. This situation will not threaten the existence of an independent Jewish state, since the Jewish element in the state will inevitably increase.

3. We must try to reduce the transition period, during which Britain must not be left in charge. It would be better to aim at transferring authority in Palestine to the Security Council.

---

3. See Doc. 94 and n. 1 there.
4. See Doc. 94.
5. See Doc. 95.
6. This telegram untraced, but cf. Doc. 97.

The question of Jewish immigration is also important in the Soviet view of Palestine.

When this was discussed in the Special Committee, the Uruguayan delegate proposed that 30,000 Jewish children, who are now in DP camps, be allowed into Palestine immediately and a quota adopted for their parents to join them as immigrants to Palestine.[7] We told our delegation to raise no objection to this.

Equally, we supported the Colombian delegation's proposal that the General Assembly should appeal to the peoples of Palestine to put an end to violence and also to cooperate with the UN in solving the Palestine problem.

The general debates on the Palestine question have now ended, and the Special Committee is starting to consider the draft resolutions put forward by various delegations.

Our delegation will vote for the Swedish–American resolution. This proposes that the UN's recommendations be based on the principles set out in the recommendations of the Palestine Committee which were unanimously accepted. We shall also vote for the plan accepted by the majority of this committee. Our delegation will support the Yugoslav proposal that all Jewish refugees now in camps on the island of Cyprus[8] be admitted to Palestine immediately, regardless of quotas.

Compiled by A. Timofeev
First Secretary of the United Nations Department

100
V.M. Molotov to I.V. Stalin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.06, OP.9, P.22, D.267, LL.12–13
Moscow, 26 October 1947

To Comrade Stalin,

In his telegram No. 388–389 of 27 October,[1] Vyshinskii informs us that the First Sub-Committee of the Palestine [Ad Hoc] Committee has started planning a framework for Palestine in the transition period based on the unanimously accepted recommendations and the report adopted by the majority of the Special Committee.

Doc. 99

7. See Doc. 98, n. 2.
8. The British authorities established internment camps in Cyprus in August 1946. In summer 1947, 17,000 illegal Jewish immigrants to Palestine were interned there.

Doc. 100

1. These telegrams have not been traced. The discrepancy in dates between the telegrams of Vyshinskii and Molotov can only be explained by an error in one of them.

Vyshinskii makes the following proposals:

1. The mandate will be abolished as of 1 January 1948.

2. British troops will be withdrawn, at the latest, three to four months after the abolition of the mandate.

3. There will be a transition period of not more than one year after the abolition of the mandate.

4. During the transition period Palestine will be governed by the United Nations Security Council, through the Special Commission made up of the representatives of members of the Security Council. The commission will be located in Palestine.

5. The Special Commission will take measures to establish the frontiers of the Jewish and Arab states in accordance with the General Assembly's resolution on the partition of Palestine.

6. The Special Commission, after consultation with the democratic parties and public organizations of the Jewish and Arab states, will choose a Provisional Council of Government in each state, which will operate under the general direction of the Special Commission.

7. The Provisional Council of Government of each state, not later than six months after its formation, will conduct elections to a constituent assembly on democratic principles. The procedure for the elections will be worked out by the governmental councils and will be approved by the Special Commission of the Security Council.

8. The constituent assembly of each state will draw up a democratic constitution and elect a government.

9. When the provisional councils of government have been formed they will proceed, under the supervision of the Special Commission, to set up administrative bodies for both central and local government.

10. As soon as possible, these governmental councils will organize an armed police force drawn from the citizens of their states. This force should be large enough to maintain internal order and to avert frontier clashes. The armed police will be under the operational control of its national command personnel, but the general military and political supervision of its activities will be carried out by the Special Commission.

Vyshinskii indicates that the above proposals are basically in agreement with the opinion of representatives of the Jewish Agency.

I propose that we should agree with Vyshinskii's proposals.[2]

V. Molotov

2. Handwritten note on the top of the first page of the document: 'Comrade Poskrebyshev reported by VCh [internal communication network] that Comrade Stalin agrees. Podtserob'.

101
L. Gelber to the Jewish Agency Executive

COPY: ISA 93.03/93/6
[New York] 5 November 1947
Strictly Confidential

UNITED STATES POLICY: II

On Sunday evening, November 2, 1947, and as directed by the Executive, I again saw Mr. Dean Rusk, director of the United Nations Department of the State Department (as it is to be named shortly) to discuss the matter he had raised with me the previous Friday.[1] He seemed gratified to hear the message I had been directed to convey. So far as unauthorized immigration to Palestine was concerned, he remarked that it was important for our relations with the United States government, just as it was important for theirs with the British, that we should 'hold off for a bit'. Once the monthly immigration figures that had been put forward once more by Mr. Herschel Johnson were part of a functioning scheme, the problem, he said, would take care of itself.

Mr. Rusk received me in Mr. Marshall's own hotel suite; during the war he had been a colonel on the general staff; until March 1947 he had, in his civilian capacity, been political assistant to the secretary of war and was presumably one of the new figures brought over to the State Department by the secretary from his former associations in the army. It would be a fair guess that Mr. Rusk is no ordinary departmental head but is one who enjoys the confidence and speaks the mind of General Marshall himself. And if that is so, the utmost significance should be attached to some further comments of Mr. Rusk's.

(1) For our own good, he suggested, we should avoid any appearance of a tie-up with Russia. People were puzzled by Russia's stand in favour of partition; by the novelty of what seemed to be a pro-Zionist policy. Now there was this talk behind the scenes of Jewish displaced persons gathering at Constanza in the Black Sea and sailing for Palestine from the Russian zone – a circumstance we ourselves might regard as reflecting a humanitarian attitude by the USSR, but which others might interpret as a Great Power manoeuvre, in which the displaced persons were pawns, to embarrass the Anglo-American grouping. Mr. Rusk advised us to look into the effect on the United States and the western world of any special link being attributed to the Zionists and the Soviet Union.

---

1. In their previous meeting Rusk raised the question of illegal immigration to Palestine, in view of the large-scale immigration effort by the Jewish Agency which was engaged then in bringing the *Pan York* and the *Pan Crescent* from Constanza in Romania to Palestine with more than 15,000 immigrants on board. Rusk said that this effort was straining American relations with the British and advised the Zionists to stop the ships as long as the United Nations was deliberating the Palestine issue (see *Political Documents of the Jewish Agency*, Vol. II, No. 448, pp. 807–9).

(2) How, I asked, did Mr. Rusk himself explain the more sympathetic attitude of Russia to Jewish Palestine. He said he had no official view to offer but he would repeat what one observer had intimated to them. It was agreed in American circles that the main instrument of American policy against Russia today was the Marshall Plan; it was no less agreed that the chief aim of Russia against the United States was to undermine the Marshall Plan and prevent its fruition. If, in pursuit of that objective the Russians could win over the Jews of Europe (perhaps also of America), they would have swung to their side a powerful influence.

My reply to speculation such as that was, of course, the obvious one. Since the Russians and the Americans were proceeding along parallel lines over Palestine, there was no reason why the Jews of Europe should be more grateful to the Russians than to themselves. Moreover, if the Marshall Plan would actually succeed in restoring to Europe a measure of prosperity, the surviving Jews of Europe would have an additional reason for being grateful to the United States. The Americans would have helped them materially in their present surroundings, and would also have done much to help them and their brethren to the extent that a positive Palestinian policy could assist European and Palestinian Jewry alike. Having exhausted other possibilities, he thereupon admitted that Russian policy over the Zionist issue could conceivably be a disinterested one – as he regarded that of the United States.

[...][2]

102
A. Sultanov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.3, D.11, L.62
Moscow, 5 November 1947[1]
Secret

SUMMARY OF THE LETTER OF USSR CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES IN IRAQ, COMRADE SULTANOV, ON THE PALESTINE PROBLEM

The Position of the Arabs

The Palestine question is at present central to political life in the Arab countries. Arab circles consider British imperialism the weaker enemy compared to Zionism, since the latter will bring about not only the economic

Doc. 101

2. For the rest of the document see *Political Documents of the Jewish Agency*, Vol. II, No. 462, pp. 824–6.

Doc. 102

1. The original was written on 5 November 1947; a summary was prepared by the Middle East Department on 2 February 1948 and filed in the department's archives.

penetration of Jewish capital, and the Anglo-American capital which backs it, into the Arab markets of neighbouring countries, but also the seizure of Transjordan in the near future, followed by Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. Moreover, there is no threat of Anglicization of Palestine in national terms, and the domination of British imperialism in the East will come to an end sooner or later. The Jews, however, have been able to build whole cities and large settlements in Palestine, driving out indigenous inhabitants from several areas of the country. 'The creation of a Jewish state in the heart of the Arab countries would threaten the achievement of the Arabs' historic dreams of restoring the economic and cultural unity of the Arab countries, since their contacts would have to be carried out through a hostile Jewish Palestine.'[2] The Arabs have no objection to guaranteeing equal democratic rights to the Jewish population provided that there is an end to immigration and to plans to create a separate Jewish state. The Arabs believe that if they do not prevent the creation of a Jewish state now, it will be too late afterwards.

The Reaction of Local Groups to the Position of the Soviet Delegation at the UN on the Palestine Question.

Arab circles are convinced that the Soviet Union will not agree to the project of creating a Zionist state for the following reasons:

1. The Soviet Union has always adhered to the principle of self-determination and aid to the oppressed peoples of the East in their struggle for independence, while the Balfour Declaration stemmed from the British desire to maintain a Zionist reserve in the event of a stormy Arab drive for independence.

2. At the UN the Soviet Union supported the Indonesian Republic and the demands of Egypt that British troops be evacuated and the unjust treaty with Britain be revoked.

3. The governments of the Arab countries considered that the USSR 'would always vote against the Anglo-Americans on any question'.

The reactionary press concluded from the speeches of the Soviet delegates at the UN that the Soviet Union 'would proceed only on the basis of its own political interests' in resolving global questions, and not on the basis of just principles.

Democratic and communist parties have always rejected the Balfour Declaration as an imperialist undertaking and have supported the struggle against Zionism – the agent of British and American imperialism; and have made it clear that the Soviet Union would support the Arabs. Therefore our friends have become somewhat alarmed and are expecting an outburst of internal reaction, encouraged by the Anglo-Saxons.

* * *

2. Quotations taken from Sultanov's original text.

The disagreements between the Hashemites (Iraq and Transjordan), who want to annex all or part of Palestine to Transjordan as a first step towards realizing the project of a 'Greater Syria', and the other Arab countries on the future of Palestine will weaken the position of the Arabs. This will make it easier to create conditions in which the Arab League could agree to a solution of the Palestine question which is barely acceptable to the Arab nationalists, or the delay of a solution for a number of years.

Comrade Sultanov's Opinion on the Creation of a Jewish State

Positive aspects: Our position has aroused sympathy towards the USSR from Jewry throughout the world, particularly in America. If the Jewish state withdraws from Anglo-American banks and dollar diplomacy, then that could be a factor for revolutionizing the Arab East.
Negative aspects: Support for the Jews:

1. Could alienate the Arab world as a whole from us.
2. Would help the Anglo-Saxons to come to an arrangement with the reactionary leaders of the Arab League, to the detriment of the Arab peoples' democratic interests and also of the external foreign policy interests of the USSR.
3. Would help to consolidate an anti-Soviet Muslim bloc made up of countries of the Arab League, Turkey, Iraq and Pakistan.
4. Would make it easier for imperialism to suppress the democratic and revolutionary movement.
5. Further, a Zionist state could become a base for American expansion in the countries of the East.
6. 'The Arab governments, having 'lost faith' in the support of the Soviet Union, and being encouraged by the Anglo-Saxons, would use this circumstance as a reason to enter directly into an openly anti-Soviet agreement with them on opening more bases and strategic resources in case of a war against us.'

* * *

'The well-known Arab tolerance towards other religions and other nations would scarcely have a place in a Zionist nationalist-chauvinist state, the more so if it were to be headed by the present leadership of the Jewish Agency.' (According to the UN plan, 500,000 Jews and 400,000 Arabs would live in the Jewish state – note by A. S.)

Summary by A. Semioshkin

103
A.Ia. Vyshinskii to V.M. Molotov (Moscow)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.18, P.46, D.302, LL.400–3
New York, 18 November 1947
Top Secret/Top Priority

To Molotov,

With regard to the legal status of Jerusalem, the speaker submitted a plan based on the majority report of the Palestine Committee (pp. 166–9 and 193–5).[1] The text was sent unencrypted.

This plan introduces the following changes in comparison to the majority plan.

First. Point 1 is replaced by the text: 'The city of Jerusalem will be formed as a *corpus separatum* with a special international status and will be governed by the UN via:

A. the Trusteeship Council or

B. the Security Council or

C. the Special Commission chosen each year by the General Assembly and consisting of representatives of UN members who will be responsible for governing in the name of the UN.'

Second. The size of Jerusalem would remain unchanged in comparison to the description in point 2 of the majority report of the Palestine Committee.

Third. The following points of the majority report: on p. 166, points 1, 2, 3; p. 167, points 4, 5; p. 168, points 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; p. 193, point 3/1 and 2; p. 194, points 3/3, 4, 5, 6; p. 195, point 3/7, 8, 9, 10 are included in the given draft without change, with the exception of minor editorial corrections.

Fourth. The following additions are introduced:

1) The body which will govern Jerusalem in the name of the UN will work out and ratify a detailed Statute for Jerusalem which will include the basic propositions found in the plan under discussion.

2) The governor will be appointed by the body governing Jerusalem in the name of the UN and will be responsible to it.

3) The governor will present for this body's confirmation a draft plan that provides for the Jewish suburbs of Jerusalem to be separated and formed into a special municipal unit (the Jews' proposal).

4) A legislative council will be convened. It will be elected by the adult population of the city regardless of nationality on the basis of a universal, secret and proportional vote.

5) Representatives of the Arab and Jewish states will be appointed at the same time as the governor. Their duties will consist of protecting the interests of their states and citizens.

---

1. References are, here and hereafter, to a preliminary mimeographed report of UNSCOP to the General Assembly. For the final report see *GA OR, Second Session,* Supplement No. 11; *United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, Report to the General Assembly.*

6) Arabic, English and Hebrew will be the official languages of the city.

7) The statute on Jerusalem will remain in effect for ten years; afterwards, there will be a popular vote. If two thirds of the voters call for a reconsideration, it will be reviewed.

In discussion of the plan, we reserved our position as a whole, noting that suitable bodies for governing Jerusalem could be the Security Council or the Trusteeship Council.

I do not regard a General Assembly commission as suitable. The US representative spoke in favour of the Trusteeship Council. We consider the Security Council more suitable as a body to govern Jerusalem, but this proposal has no chance. In this case it would be expedient to advocate the Trusteeship Council. The Jews agree to this, fearing that otherwise the whole business will fall through.

The above-mentioned additions to the majority plan of the Palestine Committee do not evoke any objections, but we consider it expedient to exclude English from the official languages.

Please send instructions if possible by the morning of 19 November, when the next session will take place.[2]

Vyshinskii

104
A.A. Gromyko's Speech at the Second Session of the UN General Assembly[1]

United Nations, Official Records of the Second Session of the GA, Plenary Meetings of the General A[ssembly], 16 Sept.–29 Nov. 1947, 26 Nov., 125th meeting, pp. 1358–63

26 November 1947

Mr. Gromyko (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as everyone knows, has had no direct material or other interests in Palestine; it is interested in the question of Palestine because it is a member of the United Nations and because it is a

---

Doc. 103

2. No reply to this telegram has been traced. The administration of Jerusalem was ultimately granted to the Trusteeship Council.

Doc. 104

1. On 25 October 1947 the Ad Hoc Committee adopted the proposal for the partition of Palestine into two states. The partition plan was discussed and put to a vote at the General Assembly plenary session held between 26 and 29 November 1947.

Great Power that bears, just as do other Great Powers, a special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace. These facts determine the stand taken by the government of the USSR on the question of Palestine. The views of the delegation of the USSR have already been expressed fully enough at the Special Session of the General Assembly in May 1947, as well as in the course of the debates during the present session. I shall not, therefore, repeat what has already been stated earlier by the USSR delegation when the question of the future of Palestine was being considered. But I believe that a few additional remarks will not be useless, in view of the fact that the General Assembly at this or a following meeting will have to take a momentous decision that will decide the future of Palestine. It is natural, therefore, for every delegation to regard it as a duty not only to take up a definite position by voting for a particular proposal but also to give reasons for the stand it takes.

When the question of the future of Palestine was under discussion at the Special Session of the General Assembly, the government of the USSR pointed to the two most acceptable solutions of this question. The first was the creation of a single democratic Arab–Jewish state in which Arabs and Jews would enjoy equal rights. In case that solution were to prove unworkable because of Arab and Jewish insistence that, in view of the deterioration in Arab–Jewish relations, they would be unable to live together, the government of the USSR, through its delegation at the Assembly, pointed to the second solution, which was to partition Palestine into two free, independent and democratic states – an Arab and a Jewish one.

The Special Session of the General Assembly, as you know, set up a special committee on Palestine which carefully studied the question of Palestine in order to find the most acceptable solution. After the work of this committee had been completed, we were gratified to find that its recommendation, or to be more exact, the recommendation of the majority of the committee, coincided with one of the two solutions advanced by the USSR delegation at the Special Session. I have in mind the solution of partitioning Palestine into two independent democratic states – an Arab and a Jewish one.

The USSR delegation, therefore, could not but support this alternative which was recommended by the Special Committee. We now know that not only did the Special Committee which studied the problem of the future of Palestine accept the alternative of partition, but that this proposal gained the support of an overwhelming majority of the other delegations represented in the General Assembly. The overwhelming majority of member states of the United Nations reached the same conclusion as had been reached by the USSR government after a comprehensive study of the question how the problem of the future of Palestine should be resolved.

We may ask why it is that the overwhelming majority of the delegations represented in the General Assembly adopted this solution and not another. The only explanation that can be given is that all the alternative solutions of

the Palestinian problem were found to be unworkable and impractical. In stating this, I have in mind the project of creating a single independent Arab-Jewish state with equal rights for Arabs and Jews. The experience gained from the study of the Palestinian question, including the experience of the Special Committee, has shown that Jews and Arabs in Palestine do not wish or are unable to live together. The logical conclusion followed that, if these two peoples that inhabit Palestine, both of which have deeply rooted historical ties with the land, cannot live together within the boundaries of a single state, there is no alternative but to create, in place of one country, two states – an Arab and a Jewish one. It is, in the view of our delegation, the only workable solution.

The opponents of the partition of Palestine into two separate, independent, democratic states usually point to the fact that this decision would, as they allege, be directed against the Arabs, against the Arab population in Palestine and against the Arab states in general. This point of view is, for reasons that will be readily understood, particularly emphasized by the delegations of the Arab countries. But the USSR delegation can not concur in this view. Neither the proposal to partition Palestine into two separate, independent states nor the decision of the Ad Hoc Committee that was created at that session and which approved the proposal which is now under discussion, is directed against the Arabs. This decision is not directed against either of the two national groups that inhabit Palestine. On the contrary, the USSR delegation holds that this decision corresponds to the fundamental national interests of both peoples, that is to say, to the interests of the Arabs as well as of the Jews.

The representatives of the Arab states claim that the partition of Palestine would be an historic injustice. But this view of the case is unacceptable, if only because, after all, the Jewish people has been closely linked with Palestine for a considerable period in history. Apart from that, we must not overlook – and the USSR delegation drew attention to this circumstance originally at the Special Session of the General Assembly – we must not overlook the position in which the Jewish people found themselves as a result of the recent world war. I shall not repeat what the USSR delegation said on this point at the Special Session of the General Assembly. However, it may not be amiss to remind my listeners again that, as a result of the war which was unleashed by Hitlerite Germany, the Jews, as a people, have suffered more than any other people. You know that there was not a single country in Western Europe which succeeded in adequately protecting the interests of the Jewish people against the arbitrary acts and violence of the Hitlerites.

In connection with the proposal to partition Palestine, the representatives of some Arab states referred to the USSR and attempted to cast aspersions on the foreign policy of its government. In particular, the representative of Lebanon twice exercised his ingenuity on the subject. I have already pointed out that the proposal to divide Palestine into two separate independent states, and the position which the USSR has taken in this matter, are not directed

against the Arabs, and that, in our profound conviction, such a solution of this question is in keeping with the basic national interests not only of the Jews but also of the Arabs.

The government and the peoples of the USSR have entertained and still entertain a feeling sympathy for the national aspirations of the nations of the Arab East. The USSR's attitude towards the efforts of these peoples to rid themselves of the last fetters of colonial dependence is one of understanding and sympathy. Therefore, we do not identify with the vital national interests of the Arabs the clumsy statements made by some of the representatives of Arab states about the foreign policy of the USSR in connection with the question of the future of Palestine. We draw a distinction between such statements, which were obviously made under the stress of fleeting emotions, and the basic and permanent interests of the Arab people. The USSR delegation is convinced that Arabs and the Arab states will still, on more than one occasion, be looking towards Moscow and expecting the USSR to help them in the struggle for their lawful interests, in their efforts to cast off the last vestiges of foreign dependence.

The delegation of the USSR maintains that the decision to partition Palestine is in keeping with the high principles and aims of the United Nations. It is in keeping with the principle of the national self-determination of peoples. The policy of the USSR in the sphere of nationality problems, which has been pursued ever since its creation, is a policy of friendship and self-determination of the peoples. That is why all the nationalities that inhabit the USSR represent a single united family that has survived desperate trials during the war years in its fight against the most powerful and most dangerous enemy that a peace-loving people has ever met.

The solution of the Palestine problem based on a partition of Palestine into two separate states will be of profound historical significance, because this decision will meet the legitimate demands of the Jewish people, hundreds of thousands of whom, as you know, are still without a country, without homes, having found temporary shelter only in special camps in some western European countries. I shall not speak of the conditions in which these people are living; these conditions are well known. Quite a lot has been said on this subject by representatives who share the USSR delegation's point of view in this matter, and which support the plan for partitioning Palestine into two states.

The Assembly is making a determined effort to find the most equitable, most practical, most workable and at the same time the most radical solution to the Palestine problem. In doing so, the Assembly bases itself on certain irrefutable facts which led to the Palestinian question being raised at the United Nations. What are these facts? Fact number one is that the mandate system has been found wanting. I shall say more: the mandate system has failed. That the mandate system has failed we know even from the statements of the United Kingdom representatives. These statements were made at the

Special Session as well as at the present session of the Assembly. It was just because the system of governing Palestine by mandate had failed, had proved inadequate, that the United Kingdom government turned to the United Nations for help. The United Kingdom asked the Assembly to take the appropriate decision and thus to undertake itself the settlement of the problem of the future of Palestine.

Fact number two: the United Kingdom government, having turned to the United Nations, stated that it could not be responsible for implementing all the measures which will have to be put into effect in Palestine in connection with a possible decision of the General Assembly. In so doing, the United Kingdom government has recognized that the General Assembly can, by virtue of the rights and powers conferred upon it by the charter, assume responsibility for settling the question of the future of Palestine.

The USSR delegation considers it advisable, nevertheless, to draw the Assembly's attention to the fact that up to now the Assembly has not been getting from the United Kingdom the kind of support which we have the right to expect. On the one hand, the United Kingdom government has applied to the Assembly for help in settling the question of the future of Palestine; on the other hand, the United Kingdom government during the discussion of the question at the Special Session as well as during the current session of the Assembly, has entered so many reservations that willy-nilly one asks oneself whether the United Kingdom is really anxious to have the Palestinian problem settled through the United Nations.

At the Special Session of the General Assembly, the United Kingdom representative, on the one hand, declared that the United Kingdom [was] prepared to implement the United Nations decisions, provided that the responsibility for the action that would possibly have to be taken did not rest with the United Kingdom alone.

By this declaration, the United Kingdom delegation made it unequivocally clear to the other states that it was prepared to cooperate with the United Nations in the solution of this problem.

On the other hand, however, at that same Special Session, the United Kingdom representative stated that his government was prepared to give effect to the relevant decisions of the General Assembly only if the Arabs and Jews agreed on some kind of a solution of the problem. It will be clear to everyone that these two statements contradict each other. If the first statement shows the readiness of the United Kingdom to cooperate with the United Nations in this matter, the second statement shows that the United Kingdom government may disregard the Assembly's decision.

Similar reservations have been made by the United Kingdom representative during the present session. We have heard, today, Sir Alexander Cadogan's statement on this matter. He repeated in a slightly modified form the idea that the United Kingdom was prepared to implement the Assembly's decision provided the Jews and the Arabs came to an agreement. But we all know that

the Arabs and the Jews have failed to reach an agreement. The discussion of this problem at the present session shows that an agreement between them is impossible. There seems to be no prospect of any such agreement being reached between Arabs and Jews.

This is the opinion not only of the USSR delegation but of all those delegations that have come to the conclusion that a definitive decision on this question must be reached during the present session.

All these reservations by the United Kingdom delegation show that the United Kingdom has no real desire, even now, to cooperate fully with the United Nations in solving this problem. While the vast majority of the delegations represented at the General Assembly were in favour of reaching forthwith a definite decision on the question of the future of Palestine, in favour of partitioning Palestine into two states, the United Kingdom government declares that it will comply with the Assembly decision only when the Jews and the Arabs agree between themselves. I repeat that to put forward such a stipulation is almost tantamount to burying this decision even before the General Assembly has taken it. Is that how the United Kingdom should behave in this matter, especially now, when, after lengthy discussion, it has become clear to everyone, including the United Kingdom, that the overwhelming majority of countries are in favour of partitioning Palestine?

In the course of the first session in which the question of the future of Palestine first arose, it was still possible at least to understand the reservations made by the United Kingdom delegation. But now, after the views of the overwhelming majority of the United Nations members have become clear, the lodging of such reservations is tantamount to stating in advance that the United Kingdom does not consider itself bound by any solution the General Assembly may adopt.

The USSR delegation cannot share this view. We have a right to expect the cooperation of the United Kingdom in this matter. We have a right to expect that, should the Assembly adopt a certain recommendation, the United Kingdom will take that recommendation into account, especially since the present regime in Palestine is hated equally by both Arab and Jew. You all know what the attitude towards that regime is, especially on the part of the Jews.

I think I should also mention yet another aspect.

From the very outset of these discussions, a number of delegations, mainly the delegations of Arab states, have tried to convince us that this question was ostensibly not within the competence of the United Nations. In so claiming they were unable, as might have been expected, to adduce any convincing arguments, apart from various general and unfounded statements and declarations.

The General Assembly, as well as the United Nations as a whole, not only has a right to consider this matter, but in view of the situation that has arisen in Palestine, it is bound to take the requisite decision. In the view of the USSR

delegation, the plans for the solution of the Palestinian problem which has been drawn up by the Ad Hoc Committee, and according to which the practical implementation of the measures necessary to give it effect rests with the Security Council, is in full accord with the interest of maintaining and strengthening international peace and with the interest of increasing cooperation between states. It is precisely for this reason that the USSR delegation supports the recommendation to partition Palestine.

The USSR delegation, unlike some other delegations, has from the outset taken a clear-cut, definite and unequivocal stand in this matter. It is consistently maintaining this stand. It has no intention of manoeuvring and manipulating votes as unfortunately is done at the Assembly, especially in connection with the consideration of the Palestinian question.

Editorial Note

UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION ON THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE

After arduous and protracted discussion, the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine drafted a resolution on the partition of Palestine on 25 October 1947. This resolution generally followed the lines of the UNSCOP majority report, with certain minor amendments as to borders and the timetable for the establishment of the Arab and Jewish states. This draft resolution was adopted by a simple majority of the plenary meeting of the Political (First) Committee of the General Assembly, and was tabled for discussion in the General Assembly, where a two-thirds majority was necessary. The General Assembly discussed the draft resolution between 26 and 29 November. At the end of the discussions, the draft resolution gained the necessary majority: 33 countries supported it, 13 opposed and 10 abstained. Throughout the discussion, the Soviet Union and the East European countries supported the resolution. In the final vote, all these countries, with the exception of Yugoslavia, which abstained, voted for partition. For the text of the resolution, see *Political and Diplomatic Documents,* Appendix A, pp. 797–832.

105
A.H. Silver to A.A. Gromyko (New York)

COPY: ISA 93.03/2268/16
New York, 4 December 1947

Your Excellency,

The Jewish Agency for Palestine desires to express its profound gratitude to the government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for supporting the resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in favour of the establishment of a Jewish state.

The acceptance of this recommendation marks a turning point in the history of the Jewish people. After two thousand years of national homelessness the Jews are now accorded an opportunity of entering the family of nations and making their distinctive contribution to international life. In giving its sanction to this great cause the General Assembly also offers the prospect of rehabilitation to hundreds of thousands of our people who have been the victims and survivors of Nazi oppression or are otherwise in need of a home.

The Jewish state will strive to conform to the highest example of democracy, good neighbourship and international cooperation. The Jewish people will ever be grateful to your government, which, at this session of the General Assembly, assisted it towards national liberation.

We should appreciate your transmitting the contents of this letter to your government.

I have the honour, Sir, to be,

Yours sincerely,

Abba Hillel Silver,
Chairman, American Section [of the Jewish Agency]

106
S.K. Tsarapkin to V.M. Molotov (Moscow)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.2, D.9, LL.2–4
[Washington] 8 December 1947
Secret

CONVERSATION WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JEWISH AGENCY FOR PALESTINE SHERTOK AND EPSTEIN
8 DECEMBER 1947

Today I received the representatives of the Jewish Agency for Palestine at their request. Shertok told me that he would soon be going to Jerusalem in order to familiarize himself with the situation on the spot. He will return to New York

on 1 January, and will then go to London with the United Nations Palestine Commission.[1]

Shertok told me that the United Nations Commission had not yet been appointed (that is, the commission's membership was not complete), and he recommended that the commission set out for Palestine as soon as possible, since its arrival at the present time would have great moral and political significance for the whole undertaking. According to information available to Shertok, the commission, once formed, would go immediately to London for talks with the British government.

Shertok added he had received a telegram from Ben-Gurion in Jerusalem saying that the head of the British authorities in Palestine had responded to Ben-Gurion's demand that Jewish organizations be armed for self-defence by saying that the British government had decided that from December, the area which included the town and port of Tel Aviv should be under Jewish administration, together with part of the territory eight kilometres to the north of the town, including the settlement of Petah Tikva.[2] Shertok and Epstein said that they still had to check this message and would let me have further detailed and precise information. The main thing which interests them is whether control of the port of Tel Aviv will be given to the Jews or remain with the British. At first glance, said Shertok, Ben-Gurion's telegram suggested that the British were going to hand over control to the Jews, which would enable them to import the arms they needed, at their own risk, through this port. Shertok said that he had been told that the British were going to evacuate their troops from Palestine in the northern part of the country through the port of Haifa, and in the south through Gaza.

Speaking of where the future capital of the Jewish state would be, Shertok said that the question was still open. Some people favoured Tel Aviv as the capital, while others preferred Haifa. Shertok said that during his trip to Palestine, he was thinking of visiting Cairo, and possibly Beirut, and asked whether he could make contact with our representatives there.

I replied that it was a personal matter for him to decide whether he wished to call on someone in our legation in Cairo or Beirut, but added that he should take into account the present tense situation in those cities.

As he left, Epstein said that he would be staying in Washington, and thought that in a day or two he might come to see me with confidential telegrams from Jerusalem and Tel Aviv which would throw light on the state of affairs in Palestine. Shertok noted that Arab attacks on Jews were confined to two places – Jerusalem and Jaffa – whereas the countryside was quiet, and no Arab attacks on Jews were in evidence there.

---

1. The 29 November 1947 UN partition resolution stipulated the establishment of a commission consisting of representatives of five member-states, for the implementation of the partition resolution and the administration of Palestine during the transition period prior to independence.
2. Ben-Gurion's demand had been made at a meeting with the high commissioner for Palestine, Sir Alan Cunningham, on 7 December 1947 in Jerusalem (see Ben-Gurion's telegram to Shertok in *Political and Diplomatic Documents*, No. 21, p. 35).

At the end of our conversation Shertok hinted that it would not be a bad idea if some sort of firm statement were made at tomorrow's meeting on 9 December of the Security Council in answer to the Arab representatives' declaration that that they would not obey the General Assembly's decision on the partition of Palestine. Shertok believes that a statement by the Security Council that it would take measures to quell further disorders in Palestine could bring the intransigent Arab leaders to their senses. It would also force the mufti to refrain from inflaming the anti-Jewish movement in Palestine and other Arab countries. On this point I answered Shertok by saying that there was a special reference to this point in the General Assembly's resolution, not to mention that the Security Council, within the authority granted to it by the charter, could act in any situation where there was a threat to peace and security.[3]

S. Tsarapkin

107
S.K. Tsarapkin to V.M. Molotov (Moscow)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, D.9, LL.219–21
Washington, 18 December 1947
Secret

CONVERSATION WITH EPSTEIN, THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE JEWISH AGENCY FOR PALESTINE IN WASHINGTON

Epstein paid me a call to tell me about conditions in Palestine. He gave me a confidential summary of the situation in Palestine which he had received from Jerusalem (and which I attach).[1] He said that there was no doubt that the British were firmly resolved to undermine the United Nations' decision on Palestine. The British support and incite the Arabs' riots and public statements against the Jews in every way, not only in Palestine but also throughout the Near East. Epstein said that the question of the situation in Palestine had been put before the Security Council.

Doc. 106

3. Handwritten note in margin: 'Apprise Comrade Maksimov. I. Baku[lin]. 31.12.47'. Copies to Molotov, Vyshinskii, Gusev, Gromyko, US Department, Middle East Department.

Doc. 107

1. Enclosures on file. They include: 1) a letter by Golda Meyerson of 16 Dec. 1947, reporting on the deterioration of the security situation in Palestine; 2) a letter of Eliahu Sasson, also dated 16 Dec., giving an assessment of British–Arab relations.

Epstein said that they were now worried about getting arms. Indeed, they had their own factories in Palestine which could produce grenades and mortars, but it was all done by primitive methods, and that they were now bringing arms illegally to Palestine, mainly from the United States, but also from some European countries and one Latin American country.

As for the British, Epstein remarked that he did not know whether they were acting in Palestine and the Near East on instructions from London, but there was much irrefutable evidence that British representatives on the spot were actively engaged in subversive operations. Throughout the Near East there were a lot of British agents who had been working there for many years and who had an excellent knowledge of the Near East situation. These agents had formed their own view of Palestine, and they could act there on the spot even against the British government's general line, although in Epstein's opinion, what was going on in Palestine and the Near East could well be the result of directives from London. Epstein said that in the present situation it was highly desirable that the United Nations Commission should leave for Palestine as soon as possible. This would have a great political and moral effect on the course of events in Palestine.

Epstein told me that they have a large group of specialists drawing up a constitution for the Jewish state of Judea.[2] The main principle on which the constitution would be based was the neutrality of the Jewish state, on the Swiss model. The principle of neutrality had many supporters among Jewish political figures, although there were also opponents. In the present complex international circumstances, according to Epstein, they could see no better course than to stay strictly neutral. The Jewish state had become a reality mainly thanks to the United States and the Soviet Union, and it was an offspring of the United Nations. There were about five million Jews in the United States and three million in the USSR. The new Jewish state did not want to follow the line of any particular country; therefore, the most appropriate foreign policy would be neutrality and alignment with the United Nations. Epstein remarked that the Jewish state would, of course, be highly dependent economically on the United States, since at present it was only there that it could buy arms, equipment and other supplies. In this connection Epstein remarked that at this time they did not intend to ask the USSR to supply them with arms and equipment, in order not to give any occasion for insinuations, since the Jews had already been accused of making some sort of secret agreement with the Soviet government. Epstein went on to say that the conference of American Jews in Atlantic City, which had just ended, had taken the

2. A committee on constitutional problems was established by the *yishuv*'s National Council (Vaad Leumi) of the Jewish community of Palestine in October 1947 and consisted of three members: D. Remez, Y. Ben Zvi and M. Eliash. For the First Memorandum on Constitutional Problems in the [Jewish] state in Palestine, written by Z. Wahrhaftig and sent to Ben-Gurion on 14 and 27 October 1947, see CZA, S25/10630. The name of the future Jewish state was discussed at length by the Palestine Jewish press in October–November 1947. Among names suggested were 'Zion', 'Judea' and 'Israelia' (see CZA, S25/9680).

decision to collect $250 million for Palestine.[3] This was a very large sum, which would have a considerable impact on the economy of the Jewish state.

Before leaving, Epstein told me that as soon as they had formed a provisional government, it would send a delegation to the USSR to discuss the establishment of close economic and cultural links between the USSR and Judea. Epstein said that the economy of the Jewish state would be based mainly on the precision machine tools industry, which would need a highly qualified workforce, as in Switzerland. They were already making precision instruments, microscopes, industrial diamonds and other such products.[4]

S. Tsarapkin

108
Meeting: M. Shertok – A.A. Sobolev
(New York, 26 December 1947)

REPORT: ISA 93.03/2268/16

Mr. Shertok opened the conversation by asking if there is any truth in the press reports that preparations are being made by the UN to form an international force for Palestine, or if there are any plans with regard to such projects.

Mr. Sobolev confirmed these reports in confidence saying that the permanent representatives of the Big Five were asked by Mr. Lie if they were prepared to agree to the formation of such an international force. The question was put to them during a conference on various subjects and Mr. Lie took the opportunity to raise the Palestine question. They were not in a position to give an answer and Mr. Lie is still waiting for it. Mr. Sobolev made it clear that they were not asked just to agree to the formation of this force but also to indicate the likelihood of their participation in it, although Mr. Lie told them that other nations as well might be invited to participate.

Mr. Shertok asked if a formation of forces of this kind was possible from a legal aspect and from a practical-political aspect.

Mr. Sobolev thought that legally the UN was certainly entitled to form such a force. As far as one can see regarding the political complications of the formation of such a force, the key is the United States because the UK will have to leave some force in Palestine anyway, the French will be prepared to participate, the Russians are prepared even now, and China is not important

---

3. The reference is to the decisions of the United Jewish Appeal conference which opened on 12 December 1947 in Atlantic City. On the severe and acute financial problems of the future Jewish state and the desperate attempts of the Zionist leadership to achieve credits through the US government and banks, see Kaplan to Thorp, 22 Dec. 1947, *Political and Diplomatic Documents,* No. 69, pp. 92–4.
4. Copies sent to Molotov, Vyshinskii, Gusev, the US Department and the Middle East Department.

and not decisive. He asked Mr. Shertok whether, in his opinion, there were chances that the US would participate.

Mr. Shertok answered that it is well known that the Americans are against sending their own troops to Palestine and to the sending of troops by the Soviet Union.

To Mr. Shertok's question about the possibilities of intervention by the Security Council, Mr. Sobolev replied that this is definitely possible, provided that there is a majority of seven in accordance with the procedure of the Security Council.

When Mr. Shertok pointed out that one should distinguish between a Security Council action while the British are still in Palestine, and action after their evacuation, Mr. Sobolev said that it is true that the consent of the British will be required and at any rate their opposition means a veto, but practically it is possible to deal with sending troops to Palestine even when the British are still there. He thinks that if we are only after a demonstration of UN power and determination it could be arranged in a couple of days, because the US has naval units and planes in the Mediterranean, and the Russians could send two squadrons of bombers within short notice. However, if the intention is to send a force capable of conducting military operations, then infantry is required and it will take at least a month to bring them over from their present stations.

Mr. Shertok asked what steps can be taken against states that violate the UN decision by sending armed assistance to Palestinian Arabs. Mr. Sobolev answered: 'We will take diplomatic action; then can come an action of the Security Council in sending a warning to the states concerned; the Security Council can call them to stop their actions and also threaten them with action to be taken against them. The practical form of those steps can be decided only after the scale of their action is known.' The distinction between aggression and indirect assistance also depends on the scale of their action. It is quite possible that if the Arab governments are very active in supporting the Palestinian Arabs, though not sending their own troops to Palestine, there will be justification on the part of the Security Council to take action against them. One must realize that this is a slow process.

Mr. Shertok mentioned the explanation Loy Henderson gave him with regard to the embargo and mentioned that Loy Henderson also asked about our needs.[1] Mr. Sobolev agreed that the answer Mr. Henderson gave was not a positive one but could not be considered completely negative. Mr. Shertok

---

1. The United States declared an arms embargo on Palestine and the neighbouring states in mid-November 1947. On 5 Dec. 1947 the US cancelled all arms export licenses. Loy Henderson of the State Department told Shertok that the United States would be ready to go into the question of arms supplies to the *yishuv*, but that this would require considerable discussion and a decision would have to be made whether to supply these arms directly to the *yishuv* or through UN channels (see Aide Mémoire by Shertok, 24 Dec. 1947, *Political and Diplomatic Documents*, No. 75, pp. 102–4).

conveyed to Mr. Sobolev the information we had about Czechoslovakia selling arms to Arab governments.[2]

Mr. Shertok explained that our demands for arms would be based on the principle that those who undertake to obey the UN decision and to help in carrying it out are entitled to military and other support.

Mr. Sobolev agreed and said that the right procedure of dealing with our demands would be through the Palestine Commission[3] and the Security Council.

Mr. Shertok also explained the difficulties we found ourselves facing in the very pressing need for arms on the one hand and our determination to be correct with all the members of the UN.

In reply to a question by Mr. Shertok, Mr. Sobolev expressed his views that when arms are issued, it will be to the government of the Jewish state or to the Jewish Agency and not to the commission. The commission has no financial means for such a purpose, it is only a guiding and supervisory body and one of her duties might be to see that we get the arms. The [commission] will recommend how much arms are needed, how to get them and how to distribute them to governments, Jewish Agency or the Arabs.

Mr. Shertok informed Mr. Sobolev in the course of the conversation about British intentions to conduct negotiations with the commission in New York and their opinion that the commission should stay in New York for some time.

Mr. Sobolev asked how would the Provisional Council of Government[4] come into existence. The first meeting of the commission was fixed for January 9th and Mr. Sobolev thinks that we should be ready with our recommendations for the composition of the Provisional Council of Government for the first meeting.

---

2. Both Syria and the Jewish Agency were negotiating for arms in Czechoslovakia. On 22 December the Zionist agent in Prague cabled Shertok that the Syrians were effectuating a large arms deal and asked for intervention by the Soviets (see ibid., No. 67, and notes there). A part of the Syrian purchase was intercepted by the Zionists on its way to Syria and sunk at sea. For Zorin's reservations regarding the Czech sale of arms to the Arabs, see Doc. 109. See also Ginat, 'Soviet Policy toward the Arab World', pp. 231–5.
3. see Doc. 106, n. 1.
4. According to the partition resolution, the Palestine Commission was to establish in each state, as soon as possible, a Provisional Council of Government. These councils were to have full authority, subject to the Palestine Commission, in the areas under their control.

109
V.A. Zorin to V.M. Molotov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.3, D.11, LL.60–1
Moscow, 22 January 1948

Comrade V.M. Molotov,

According to a report by Comrade Bodrov, the chargé d'affaires of the USSR in Czechoslovakia, the Czechoslovak government has sold weapons to the Syrian government (mortars, mortar shells and cartridges). At the same time, the Czechs have refused to sell weapons to the Jewish Agency in Palestine, which made this request in November 1947.[1]

On this matter Agence France-Presse reported from Cairo on 13 December that the British are trying to foil the supply of Czech weapons to the Arab countries and that the British government has, allegedly, held up the remittance which the Syrian government made through London in payment for weapons bought from Czechoslovakia. This report is confirmed by an appeal to the State Insurance Company of the USSR (*Gosstrakh*) from the Czechoslovak Insurance Company Slavye which has a contract with *Gosstrakh* for its cooperation should the British obstruct insurance for the cargo of weapons sent from Czechoslovakia to Beirut for the Arabs.

Given the position we have adopted on the Palestine question, I suggest it would be possible to authorize Comrade Bodrov, when an opportunity arises, to draw Gottwald's[2] attention to the fact that the sale of weapons by the Czechoslovak government to the Arabs under present conditions, when the situation in Palestine is becoming more aggravated every day, could be used by the Anglo-Americans against the Soviet Union and the new democracies.

A draft of the appropriate telegram to Prague is appended.[3]

I await your instructions.[4]

V. Zorin

1. See Doc. 108 and n. 2 there.
2. Klement Gottwald, chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia; Prime Minister from 3 July 1946.
3. The draft telegram is of similar content and has not been printed here.
4. Handwritten note at the top of the document: 'Refrain. V. M[olotov] 27.1'. In similar circumstances Vyshinskii prevented a Czechoslovak–Egyptian arms sale (see Ro'i, *Soviet Decision Making in Practice*, pp. 150–1, 164).

110
Meeting: D.S. Solod – Riyad al-Sulh (Beirut, 23 December 1947)[1]

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2,P.3, D.11, LL.50–1
Secret

EXTRACT

When the discussion turned to current political questions in the Near East, in particular the sessions of the Political Committee of the Arab League in Cairo,[2] Sulh told me that the Arab countries had agreed once and for all that under no circumstances would they acquiesce to the partition of Palestine and the creation of a Jewish state there, that they would oppose partition by all possible methods, and to carry on a struggle by all means, however long it might last. At the same time he repeated the words already spoken to me on one occasion by the president of Syria, Shuqri al-Quwwatli, to the effect that, if necessary, the Arabs would fight for the preservation of Palestine for 200 years, as they had during the Crusades.

In answer to my question as to whether all the consequences of such a position of the Arab countries had been discussed in sufficient detail in the Political Committee, he replied in the affirmative and stated that the Arab countries were not equal in strength to other powers, but they would never agree to the partition of Palestine and the formation of a Jewish state, all the more so because partition, in fact, would mean the annexation of the Arab part of Palestine to Transjordan. Consequently it would consolidate the position of King Abdallah and his supporters.

Thus Riyad al-Sulh confirmed indirectly that Syria was the initiator and chief inspirer of the Arab countries' struggle against the partition of Palestine. Syria is afraid that following the annexation of the Arab part of Palestine to Transjordan, the question of creating a Greater Syria[3] will arise, which would then be significantly more difficult to oppose than at present.

In response to various inquiries about the Cairo session of the Arab League's Political Committee, Riyad al-Sulh told me that at present the Arab countries did not envisage the organization of a struggle outside Palestine. Nor in the meantime did the Arab armies intend to invade Palestine. Moreover, a joint general command to lead the struggle for Palestine had not yet been

1. The conversation took place on 23 December 1947. The report is dated 23 January 1948. The text was typed in one copy on 21 February 1948 and filed in the archives of the Near and Middle East Department.
2. Following the United Nations resolution on the partition of Palestine, the Arab League Council and Political Committee met in Cairo. The meeting resolved to take military measures against the Jews in Palestine, and in particular to establish a military committee charged with recruiting and training volunteers to fight in Palestine.
3. See Doc. 51, n. 8.

established, and the mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husayni, was not acknowledged as the leader of this struggle. His headquarters will not be located in the Lebanese town of Sidon, near the Palestinian border, as reported in the Arab press. In addition, economic sanctions against the powers and states which had voted for the partition of Palestine will not be applied for the present.

At present the struggle for Palestine is based on guerilla struggle in Palestine itself. At the same time, Riyad al-Sulh made it clearly understood that even this guerilla struggle in Palestine itself would not have a centralized command. Consequently, all the intimations of the Arab press to the effect that no agreement among the Arab countries had been achieved at the Cairo sessions of the Political Committee of the Arab League – on any of the fundamental questions concerning the organization of the struggle to preserve the so-called Arab character of Palestine – were fully confirmed. In other words, the differences between the Arab countries have not been resolved on any of the most important issues, the Iraqi and Transjordanian Hashemites continuing to favour a struggle against the mufti of Jerusalem, on the one hand, and against Syria and Saudi Arabia, on the other. At the same time Syria and Saudi Arabia, out of support for the mufti, made no concessions to the Hashemites, while Egypt apparently still maintained a certain degree of neutrality on these matters.

However, in conversation Riyad al-Sulh made it understood – albeit very obscurely – that the struggle unfolding in Palestine had been postponed, presumably to sometime in the more distant future. Hence, it cannot be ruled out that with the assent of the British, the struggle in Palestine will unfold when the British begin the evacuation of Palestine, and before the United Nations is able to create the organs and military forces capable of ruling Palestine and maintaining order and security there.

111
Meeting: S.K. Tsarapkin – E. Epstein (Washington, 26 January 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.3, D.11, LL.65–71
Secret

Epstein reported that there was now indisputable evidence confirming the duplicitious behaviour of the British on the Palestine question. The British did not want to leave Palestine and were now taking all measures to create in Palestine and the whole of the Near East a situation which would lead to the breakdown of the UN resolution. The chief role in the Near East in this respect was now being played by a trio of Englishmen – Brigadier Clayton, the

diplomat Sir Walter Smart and General Glubb. Brigadier Clayton was the chief organizer of this trio. During the First World War he was the chief assistant of the notorious agent of the Intelligence Service, [T.E.] Lawrence. In fact Clayton is the founder of the Arab League, that instrument of British policy in the whole of the Near and Middle East. At present Clayton is implementing the link between the Foreign Office in London and the Arab League. Sir Walter Smart has been in Cairo for many years in the capacity of oriental secretary.* He is a serious specialist on Arab affairs. The third person is General Glubb.[1] Officially he is in the service of King Abdallah of Transjordan. Glubb speaks excellent Arabic and knows many dialects of that language. He is a specialist on the Bedouin question and has written a number of books about it. At present his function is to coordinate the activity of member-countries of the Arab League from the military and political point of view.

In order to disrupt the General Assembly's resolutions on the partition of Palestine, the British are using three types of armed units in Palestine itself: 1) the mufti's forces, led by one Hasan Salame. It is known that during the last war, when the mufti himself was with Hitler in Germany, Salame was flown to Palestine by the Germans and landed by parachute near Jericho. He broke his leg while landing and was captured by the British, but was then released and is now active in Palestine as one of the mufti's closest associates. He leads the Palestinian Arab troops; 2) armed detachments of Muslims, numbering up to 5,000. Among them are units of Yugoslav Muslims and also traitors and deserters from Crimea and the Caucasus; 3) men from General Anders' army.[2]

The above-mentioned trio of Englishmen – Clayton, Smart and Glubb – is inspiring provocative actions by the Arab states, organizing attacks on Palestine from outside and, using these three military formations, is conducting a subversive campaign against the UN resolution inside Palestine.

In order to deflect any accusations and to maintain its alibi, the British government from time to time sends its diplomatic representatives to the capitals of Arab states. Not long ago, for example, the British sent protest notes to the Syrian government, and also to the government of their own puppet, King Abdallah of Transjordan, with regard to an invasion of their forces into Palestine. Epstein told me that last Wednesday, 21 January, he and Shertok twice visited the State Department and had talks with Henderson and Lovett.[3]

* A diplomatic post in Eastern countries. Usually the Foreign Office appoints to this post someone who has received special education in the political, historical, economic, linguistic and other areas of one or a group of the eastern countries. Oriental secretaries, as a rule, remain in their places for many years and are experts and advisers on their country or countries. [S.Ts.]

---

1. Lieutenant-General Sir John B. Glubb (1893–1983), known in the Arab world as Glubb Pasha, was commander-in-chief of the Arab Legion, 1938–56.
2. Soldiers and officers of the army loyal to the Polish government-in-exile fought with the British armed forces in Italy against the Nazis. After World War II most of them refused to return to Poland, then controlled by the Soviet Union (see also Doc. 45, n. 5).
3. No record of these meetings has been traced.

They raised the following three issues with the State Department:

1. Lifting the embargo on the export of military matériel from the US to Palestine.[4] The Jews were not given a precise answer to this question in the State Department: reference was made to the fact that the United States wanted to maintain an identical attitude towards both sides on this matter and that the ban on the export of arms to Palestine applied in equal measure to the Jews and to the Arabs. To this Shertok and Epstein replied that by introducing an embargo on the export of military matériel to Palestine, the American government had put the Jews in a very difficult and unfair position. While the Palestinian Arabs, especially since the conclusion of the British pacts with Iraq and Transjordan, had complete freedom to acquire the weapons which they needed from the British through the above-mentioned and other Arab countries, the Jews were effectively deprived of such an opportunity, because the only place where they could acquire weapons – the US – was inaccessible to them as a result of the embargo. Under such circumstances, the embargo on the export of arms to Palestine was in fact, if not in form, a discriminatory measure by the government of the US, and in practice directed solely against the Jews. Epstein emphasized that strong influence was undoubtedly being exerted on the State Department's attitude by strategic, political and economic interests in the United States. This was reflected in the Marshall Plan and discussions now taking place in Congress.[5]

Here we must take into account that, in general, pro-Arab and anti-Jewish sentiments are strong in the State Department. Moreover, the American oil monopolies, which have concessions and other interests in Arab countries, are putting great pressure on the State Department.

2. The second issue which the Jews raised with the State Department concerned the dispatch by the Security Council of forces of the Great Powers – the permanent members of the council – to Palestine.[6] This proposal was motivated by the fact that the present situation in Palestine demands the presence of such forces in order to ensure the implementation of the General Assembly's resolution on the partition of Palestine. In this connection it was said that the Arab countries were being allowed to adopt a defiant and blatantly militant position thanks to the connivance or even direct incitement on the part of Great Britain. The fact that the Arab countries were in practice ignoring the UN resolution on the partition of Palestine and were threatening Palestine with armed seizure required that the United Nations, and in particular the Security Council, adopt the necessary urgent measures to ensure the implementation of the General Assembly resolution. One such measure should

4. See Doc. 108, n. 1
5. Reference to the debate on the European Recovery Program (the Marshall Plan), and particularly proposals of Bernard M. Baruch presented to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 19 January 1947 concerning the European Defence Pact and the stockpiling of strategic materials in the US.
6. See Doc. 108 on the international military force.

in the first instance be the dispatch of special forces to Palestine by the Security Council.

In response to this, State Department officials told the Jews that the Palestine question was now the affair of the United Nations as a whole, and, noting the complexity of this question, they avoided giving a definite response. However, Shertok and Epstein attacked the State Department, saying that the Palestine question was now with the Security Council, and therefore the matter could not be spoken of in such an abstract form by saying that it was the business of the United Nations. The United States was one of the countries represented on the Security Council, and therefore the US could not evade its share of responsibility in the council when it was considering the situation in Palestine and the question of dispatching foreign troops to Palestine.

Epstein told me that he had learned from reliable sources that the US Defense Department was now examining the question of sending foreign troops to Palestine. At the present stage of the Defense Department study of the issue, the following points of view had been expressed. First, it was necessary to consider whether foreign troops should be sent there, and if so, by which powers. It was also necessary to resolve the question of whether forces of the Soviet Union should be permitted to take part. Second, if participation by Soviet forces were to be allowed, then on what conditions? The State Department allegedly inclines to the view that the United States could agree to Soviet forces being sent to Palestine, on condition that they were sent there by sea. But if Soviet forces were to make their way there overland, for example through Iran or Turkey, and further through Iraq and Syria, and if the USSR were to demand the right to supply its troops while they were in these countries, then the United States could not possibly agree to that, even if it were to threaten the total collapse of the process of implementing the General Assembly's resolution on Palestine. For the moment, this is the inconclusive opinion of the Defense Department, and the State Department will examine the question in a couple of days' time. During the conversation, Epstein threw out the remark that they, the Jews, had an interest in foreign troops of such powers as the US and USSR being in Palestine, and that they had no doubt that the Soviet Union, of course, would agree to send its troops there. In this regard, the Jews, taking into consideration the position of the Americans explained above, wanted the Soviet Union to show the same spirit of compromise and consent about this as it had shown at the last General Assembly – an atmosphere which led to the adoption of the resolution on the partition of Palestine. Epstein could be understood to say that what the Jews wanted was for the Soviet government to consent to send its troops to Palestine by sea and to come to an agreement on this matter with the US when it would be discussed.

3. The third proposal which the Jews put before the State Department was that the US should take measures in the Security Council which would enable the United Nations Commission to travel to Palestine and begin work there.

Epstein expressed the hope that the Soviet government would adopt the same position as Israel on this question, which would ensure the earliest possible departure of the commission to Palestine.

In the course of the conversation Epstein more than once referred favourably to Comrade Gromyko's speech at a dinner for Jewish writers in New York.[7] He also noted with great satisfaction the representation made by Comrade Solod to the Syrian government in Damascus.[8]

S. Tsarapkin

112
Meeting: S.K. Tsarapkin – E. Epstein (Washington, 9 February 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.3,D.11, L.86
Secret

As regards Palestine affairs, Epstein said it was perfectly clear to them now that with regard to the policy of the United States on the resolution of the Palestine question, if it were left in the hands of Forrestal and Lovett, then one might say in advance that when this question was discussed in the Security Council, the United States would adopt a position favourable to the Arabs. At present, Palestine is the focus of the entire Near and Middle Eastern policy of the British and the Americans. The Americans and the British are directing all their efforts towards consolidating, politically and strategically, the whole of the Near and Middle East with its rich oil resources and military-strategic importance. Recently a certain Duce,[1] the representative of an Arab–American oil company, travelled through the Arab countries in the Near East. Stating that he had no official mission and that he was expressing his own personal opinion, he told the leaders of the Arab states that they should be calm, that, in his opinion, United States policy on the Palestine question was not yet finalized, and that it was possible that the United States might reconsider its position on the resolution of the Palestine question, which it had adopted at the last General Assembly of the United Nations.

Doc. 111

7. On 30 December 1947 Gromyko spoke at a US–USSR Palestine friendship dinner arranged by the American Committee of Jewish Writers, Artists and Scientists. He called for a speedy and effective implementation of the partition resolution.
8. Copies to Molotov, Vyshinskii, Gromyko, US Department, Near and Middle East Department, Second European Department.

Doc. 112

1. James T. Duce, vice-president of the Arab–American Oil Company — ARAMCO.

As a result of his journey through the Arab countries, Duce compiled a detailed report, which, obviously, will be carefully examined in US government circles. The report proposes that the United States should review its policy on the Palestine question and, in so doing, strengthen the position of the US and American oil companies in the Arab countries. This report allegedly includes an assertion that the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine is the work of the Soviet Union, that the Jewish state in Palestine is a Trojan horse in the hands of the communists and that there is a secret agreement between the Jews and the Soviet Union.

113
G. Ruffer to M. Shertok (New York)

COPY: ISA 93.03/65/13
[New York] 12 February 1948

From various conversations I came to understand that the two following points are in the minds of leading military and State Department people with regard to US general and Middle East policy – both concerning the USSR:

(1) With regard to the Arab states' threat against US interests (particularly oil) in the Middle East, the US is unable to adopt the line that they could protect their threatened interests by the dispatch of US troops to the Middle East. This would immediately permit the Russians to invade Northern Iran with the claim of protecting their interests there (USSR/Iranian unratified oil agreement).[1]

(2) The US military and State Department people are opposed to the participation of the USSR in the international force, not because they are afraid that the Russians may not leave the country, but the US people claim that wherever Russian troops are garrisoned, the Russians infiltrate their agents, build up a subversive network, start propaganda among the population – all this calculated to prepare the ground for the revolutionary upheaval which may occur much later, after the evacuation of the Russian troops.

1. In April 1946 Iran and the Soviet Union agreed to establish a joint company for exploitation of the oil resources of northern Iran. The agreement was rejected by the Iranian parliament in October 1947.

114
M. Shertok to D. Ben-Gurion (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: CZA S25/1702
[New York] 13 February 1948

Saw Grom[yko] 5th February, gave gist Lifshitz.[1] Asked intervention regarding sale Czechoslovakia arms Arabs[2] and Yugoslavia refusal.[3] He did not reply, but visible he made mental note. Today Ehud [Avriel] telephoned Arabs' consignment returned Prague, but Yugoslavia persists refusal. Asked for further interruption.[4] Doubt if cause and effect, though Ehud believes due to Soviet instructions. During talk, Grom[yko] asked whether we able unload. Myself replied we have ways. Before approaching him again am consulting you whether should give them definite assurance this point as otherwise his readiness intervene extremely questionable, if it is at all likely.[5]

Shertok

115
K. Sergeichuk to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.15, L.2
Moscow, 6 March 1948
Secret

The Central Postal Administration of Palestine has proposed to the Ministry of Communications the establishment of an exchange of parcel post between the USSR and Palestine.[1]

The exchange of parcels between different states takes place on the basis of the International Agreement on the Exchange of Parcel Post, formulated and approved by [international] postal congresses.

Doc. 114

1. Reference is to a lengthy report on the political situation at the UN by Zalman Lifshitz. The report was published in *Political and Diplomatic Documents*, No. 204, pp. 339–49.
2. See Doc. 108 and n. 2 there.
3. Refers to the Yugoslav authorities' refusal to permit the transportation through their territory of arms purchased in Czechoslovakia for the *yishuv*; Yugoslavia was still, at this point, susceptible to Soviet persuasion.
4. Should apparently read 'intervention'.
5. Ben-Gurion replied that there was practically no government control at Tel Aviv port and any ship could discharge its cargo safely (see his telegram to Shertok, 18 Feb. 1948, CZA S25/1702).

Doc. 115

1. The proposal apparently ran counter to the policy pursued by the Palestine Postal Administration. As early as 31 January 1948 the administration informed the UN Palestine Commission that the Palestine government would terminate its control of postal services on 15 May 1948. Surface mail from Nicosia to Palestine was to be suspended on 15 April 1948 (see *The Palestine Post*, 26 March 1948).

The USSR is not a signatory to this agreement but carries out the exchange of parcels with states with which it has concluded bilateral agreements.

The conclusion of an agreement on the exchange of parcels with Palestine is complicated by the fact that it will depend on the Turkish Postal Administration, through whose territory the parcels will have to be sent.

Proceeding from what is stated above, the Ministry of Communications considers it necessary to refrain temporarily from concluding an agreement on the exchange of parcel post with Palestine.

Please let me have your opinion on this matter.

APPENDIX: translation of the letter from Palestine.[2]

K. Sergeichuk

Editorial Note

THE SHIFT IN US POLICY TOWARDS PALESTINE

On 19 March the Security Council convened to deliberate on the situation in Palestine. It discussed a report presented by three permanent members of the council – the United States, France and China – and heard the representatives of the Jewish Agency, on the one hand, and of Egypt and Syria, on the other. In the course of the debate, the American representative, Warren Austin, reported that following consultation among the three permanent members of the council, it had become evident that it was impossible to implement the General Assembly partition resolution. He proposed instead that a temporary trusteeship for Palestine be established as an interim solution, 'without prejudice to the rights, claims or position of the parties concerned or the eventual political settlement' of Palestine. To this end, he said, a draft Security Council resolution would be tabled soon, and the Special Session of the General Assembly would be convened.

2. After reading the letter, Vyshinskii asked the opinion of Golunskii (Legal Department) and Bakulin (Near and Middle East Department). They expressed their views in a memorandum dated 17 March 1948. They argued that the major reason for abstaining from negotiations on a parcel agreement with Palestine was the fact that on 15 May 1948 the mandate on Palestine would expire and the future of Palestine was still unknown. Vyshinskii added in handwriting on the Golunskii–Bakulin memorandum 'What kind of practical interest do we have in such a link?' (see AVP RF, f.089, op.1, p.2, d.15, l.4).

116
Memorandum by W. Eytan, A. Levavi, Ch. Herzog, H. Berman, E. Sasson

COPY: CZA S25/9383
Jerusalem, 26 March 1948

MEMORANDUM ON POLICY QUESTIONS

The undersigned consider it their duty – deriving from their position as senior personnel of the Political Department – to discuss jointly the political situation which has emerged. To that end, we held conversations on 24 and 25 March 1948, and we have decided to summarize and underscore the main points in writing:

1. A major question which arose was whether we should base the hope of realizing our goals on our prospects of defeating the Arab world by force of arms alone. The view was expressed that those prospects are faint, given the absence of any assistance from the Western powers, which now control this part of the world, and given the position of unfriendly neutrality on their part. Inevitably, that attitude will greatly affect our possibilities to obtain weapons, reinforcements, financial means, food, etc. At the same time, such circumstances will place virtually no impediments to the degree of Arab intervention in the fighting in Palestine. Such a situation could emerge if the British evacuate most areas of the country, while in the Security Council the discussions on Palestine become completely bogged down and our political relations with the United States become cool and tenuous almost to the same degree as has occurred in our relations with Britain. Under such conditions, large sections of the *yishuv* will face the danger of annihilation and it is difficult to see how we will overcome it – even after a lengthy struggle. *Therefore, political means must be sought to prevent the emergence of a situation such as we have described.*

2. Political activity, which will seek to achieve the goal described above, should be directed at the Western powers, on the one hand, and at the Arab states on the other. The possibilities of independent intervention by the Slavic bloc in this part of the world are at present extremely limited. If we receive concrete help from that bloc, we shall cause the United States to unequivocally take the side of our adversaries and give them greater aid. At the same time, we should not take a wholly negative attitude towards attempts by opposition elements in the *yishuv* to make contact with the Soviet bloc countries. In the event of a world war erupting in the near future, the Middle East is liable to be conquered in its initial stages by the Soviet army.

3. The political plan and organizational means for our activity *vis-à-vis* the Arab states were described briefly in the memorandum submitted by staff of the Political Department prior to the American policy shift.[1] The urgency

1. See *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 1, pp. 456–8.

ascribed to the proposals drafted at that time has only increased. It is essential to undertake intensified efforts for political contact with the Arab states, even while hostilities in Palestine continue or are intensified. We must not ignore the question of how to find an honourable solution for both us and the Arabs, a solution that can lead to peace.

4. As for our policy *vis-à-vis* the Western powers, and the United States in particular, we must not burn our bridges following the shift in the latter's Palestine policy.[2] We must, of course, insist vigorously on our right to an independent Jewish state and on the urgency of implementing that solution. At the same time, we must not adopt a position which verges on physical resistance in the face of every attempt to delay public recognition of a sovereign Jewish state, while continuing to maintain a provisional regime that will facilitate the persistent expansion of the concrete foundations of our political sovereignty in the areas of immigration, defence, administration, and the economy. This is a cause for a political battle, and we must not pursue a course of total political isolation.

5. Our political efforts should not in any way diminish our *operative* preparations for the defence of the Jewish community and the state, and the establishment of the state at the earliest date possible from a political and military viewpoint. On the contrary, these preparations should be stepped up in light of the fact that it is conceivable that our formal efforts to emerge from political isolation will not be crowned with success and that we will be forced to act unilaterally.

As regards our preparations, clear principles must be established and implemented and decisions should not be made randomly or under the influence of changing moods. We must do our utmost to fill every vacuum left during the process of the disintegration of the mandatory apparatus. We must develop and consolidate the administrative tools at our disposal and develop them into instruments of government appropriate for the state in the making.

In this connection, the question arises: how is it conceivable that a government structure would develop without utilizing those employees and departments which are being left behind in Jerusalem as a consequence of some incomprehensible routine and inertia? The scope of functions is enormous, and it is blatantly obvious that a number of aspects of administration have been neglected completely and will have to be reconstituted within the boundaries of the Jewish State, and that thus far only a few of the official administrative staff of the *yishuv*'s institutions have been recruited to participate. Although we have accepted the idea of a Jewish state in part of Palestine, it is no longer possible to expect the administration of the institutions to carry out activities on behalf of the Jerusalem [Jewish] community council.

Whatever political regime is introduced in Palestine in the near future – the prospects for establishing a Jewish state in part of Palestine depend first and

2. See Editorial Note, p. 265.

foremost on the extent to which the state actually functions in the various fields of government.

6. The basis for our activities in the field of defence will have to be: amassing force, the planned and calculated arraignment of forces in anticipation of a decisive confrontation with the Arab world, the speedy enhancement of the high command while mobilizing all professional Jewish forces in Palestine and overseas. The planning must be for a real war. We must make all preparations to enable us to acquire compact and economical front lines in a matter of hours, in the event that the political and military situation continues to develop in the direction of a comprehensive military confrontation. Already at the present stage, we must reject the principle of preserving our prestige at all costs, a principle that at times is combined with a lack of civic courage and decisiveness.

An extreme example of misdirected thinking and activity in the above realm is the situation in the Jerusalem region. The local command exists within a framework which prevents it from being able to bear the requisite responsibility towards a Jewish community of one hundred thousand souls, which is in danger of being cut off, besieged and destroyed, and towards its soldiers, who at times are sent to their death without sufficient justification. We are enclosing herewith a plan (drawn up by Ch. Herzog)[3] which envisages the possibility of actual war, the danger of famine in Jerusalem, the forces of both parties already in battle, and the extreme political nature of the enemy operating within the Jerusalem area specifically.

7. Finally, we would like to point out that time is pressing and that to delay decisions and operations 'until things become completely clear' is totally unjustified. The process of clarification does not depend on us, and we are liable to miss the boat and neglect possibilities and opportunities that will not recur. We must dare to act, even without total certainty, so that we will not be forced after a while to change the thrust of our operations. Not to act under existing circumstances would be unpardonable.

Eytan
Levavi
Ch. Herzog
H. Berman
E. Sasson

3. Document not on file.

117
V.M. Molotov to I.V. Stalin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.06, OP.10, P.15, D.160, LL.4–7
Moscow, 9 April 1948

To Comrade Stalin,

I present for your approval the draft of instructions to Comrade Gromyko for the session of the General Assembly.[1]

V. Molotov

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE USSR DELEGATION AT THE EMERGENCY SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE PALESTINE QUESTION

The Soviet delegation must be guided in its work at the Special Session of the General Assembly as follows:

1. It must ensure that one representative from the Soviet, Polish or Czechoslovak delegations is elected to the committee on Verification of Credentials.

2. It must not put forward a candidate for the post of president of the Assembly. The delegation is to decide on the spot whether to support the proposed candidate, according to circumstances.

3. It must ensure the election to the General Committee of two representatives of East European countries – which ones depending on the circumstances – in addition to the USSR; two vice-presidents of the Assembly and one chairman of a committee, or two committee members and one vice-president of the Assembly.

4. It must defend the resolution of the General Assembly of 29 November 1947 on the partition of Palestine, being guided by the directives given to the Soviet delegations at the Special and Second sessions of the General Assembly.

It must point out that, since the adoption of this resolution, Great Britain has obstructed its implementation by every means, in particular by opposing the arrival in Palestine of the Palestine Commission,[2] which as a consequence was unable to begin preparatory work on the spot to bring about partition.

It must point out also that the Security Council, for its part, has not exhausted all the resources at its disposal for putting this resolution into practice.

5. It must subject the American proposal on the trusteeship for Palestine[3] to criticism, taking note of the following:

a) The new US proposal on the Palestine question, aimed at repealing the resolution of the General Assembly, adopted by a two-thirds majority of votes,

1. The Second Special Session of the General Assembly opened on 16 April 1948.
2. See Doc. 106, n. 1.
3. Reference is to the US proposal in the Security Council to substitute the partition plan by an international trusteeship for Palestine – see Editorial Note, p. 265.

not only fails to guarantee peace in Palestine but will lead to aggravation of the struggle between the Jews and the Arabs and in so doing will create a threat to peace and will intensify unrest in the Middle East. At the same time the position of the General Assembly, which adopted the resolution with the active participation of the US, after detailed discussion of the Palestine question, will be compromised, making it a pawn of ruling circles in the US, which are attempting to foist upon it a new resolution on Palestine without considering the legitimate interests of the peoples there.

b) The US's proposal of trusteeship over Palestine does not correspond to the present cultural and political level of development of the Jewish and Arab peoples, and is therefore encountering resistance and opposition on the part of both Jews and Arabs. The establishment of trusteeship over Palestine would not be a step forward from the mandatory system to national self-determination for the peoples of Palestine, but would leave the country in a semi-colonial position.

c) As regards that part of the American proposals which speaks of the framework for the organization of authority in Palestine, it contradicts the principle of autonomy and is marked by distrust in the ability of the local population independently to organize the administration of Palestine on a democratic basis.

6. It must state that, for the reasons given above, the Soviet delegation will vote against the American proposal.

7. It must insist upon confirmation of the resolution of 29 November and on the adoption by UN members of effective measures to put it into practice.[4]

4. Copies to Stalin, Beria, Zhdanov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, Voznesenskii and Bulganin.

118
A.S. Semioshkin to A.A. Gromyko (New York)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.3, D.11, LL.123–31
Moscow, 13 April 1948
Secret

THE SITUATION IN PALESTINE AFTER THE UN RESOLUTION ON THE PARTITION OF THE COUNTRY
(Aide-Mémoire)

The General Assembly of the United Nations, after spending more than six months investigating the Palestine problem, adopted a democratic resolution on the creation in Palestine of two independent states – one Arab and one Jewish – on 29 November 1947. This resolution, reflecting the aspirations of the Jewish and Arab peoples to build their own life within the framework of national states, was given widespread support in democratic circles throughout the world.

The Jews
The news of the creation of a Jewish state led to great rejoicing among Jews in the whole of Palestine on 30 November. The demonstrators thanked the United Nations, the Soviet Union and other countries which supported the partition of Palestine. The opposition of the Arabs to the UN resolution and the widespread confrontations between Arabs and Jews made it necessary for the Jews to prepare for the defence of the future Jewish state. On 9 December, the Jewish Agency and the Jewish National Council announced the mobilization of the first group of recruits (17–25 years) to carry out guard duty and for deployment in the semi-legal military organization Hagana. Ben-Gurion, the chairman of the Executive Committee of the Jewish Agency, announced on 1 January 1948 that the Jews had 'come to the defence not only of themselves and not only of the decrees of the UN, but also of the frontiers of the Jewish state. We have the right to demand that the UN give us moral and material support... Such are the birth pangs of the Jewish state and we accept them with faith and with selfless devotion.'[1]

The increasing Arab opposition to partition made it a matter of urgency to create a Jewish militia. Shertok, the head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, insisted at a press conference in New York on 12 January 1948, 'It is necessary for Jewry in Palestine to have a well-armed and mechanized militia of 15–20 thousand men.' Subsequent events forced the Jewish Agency to demand the formation of a militia of 30–35,000 men, including aviation

1. Ben-Gurion's announcement was published in a press communiqué. For the communiqué in its entirety, see Ben-Gurion, *Behilahem Yisrael*, pp. 20–3.

units. This militia was supposed to be formed on the basis of the Hagana, which already had some arms, and the majority of whose soldiers had undergone military training in the ranks of the British army during World War II. Jewish organizations launched a campaign throughout the world to collect funds to buy arms for Palestine, but these efforts came up against the ban on exporting military matériel from the US (a large quantity of explosives was confiscated in New York)[2] and the effective blockade of Palestine's shores by the British fleet. The Jews, fearing that the UN resolution on Palestine would collapse in the face of Arab opposition, acquiesced, and demanded the dispatch of UN armed forces to carry out the partition of the country.

Starting in January 1948, the Jews set about forming a provisional government for the Jewish state. The refusal of the US to support the General Assembly's resolution led the Jewish Agency and the National Council to decide at a joint session on 23 March in Tel Aviv to proclaim the Jewish state on 16 May (the day after the expiry of the British Mandate in Palestine). At the end of March, a Jewish war cabinet was formed in Tel Aviv,[3] with Ben-Gurion as a member. The majority of places in the projected government were given to the Labour Party (Mapai) and the right-wing bourgeois parties, which are in close contact with reactionary circles in the US.

The Jewish Agency very quickly rejected the US proposal on trusteeship even for a short time, since 'trusteeship would inevitably mean depriving the Jews of their right to national independence. It would hand Palestine over to a foreign military regime.' Golda Meyerson, the head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, stated that 'we will never agree to trusteeship, nor to any solution except the creation of a Jewish state.' The Jewish terrorist organizations spoke out sharply against 'the betrayal of the Jewish cause by the United States'. 'If US forces are sent to Palestine to put trusteeship into effect, we shall enter into a bitter struggle against them and treat the Americans just as we treated the British aggressors' (the Irgun Zvai Leumi, 24 March). 'American imperialism does not differ in any way from British imperialism. We shall continue the fight for a Jewish state against all imperialist claims, even if we have to fight alone. But if we examine the present situation carefully, then we are almost certain that we shall not remain alone in our fight' (the Stern Group, 22 March).

Although in its official statements the Jewish Agency continues to insist on the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, there are signs that some groups of Jews are prey to anxiety and are trying to get out of Palestine, so that the Jewish Agency has been forced to forbid Jews to leave the country. At the end of March 1948, Dr. Magnes, the president of the Hebrew University in

---

2. One hundred ninety-one tons of US war surplus high explosives purchased by the Jewish Agency were seized in the US before shipment in early January 1948.
3. Reference is possibly to the Provisional Council of Government, which held its first session on 18 April 1948 under the chairmanship of Ben-Gurion. This body was superseded by the Provisional Government of Israel on 15 May.

Jerusalem and an influential political figure, called on Jews to agree to UN trusteeship and the creation of a bi-national state.

Immigration

Despite the refusal of the mandatory power to provide a port for Jewish immigration by 1 February, as required by the UN resolution, some ships have succeeded in landing illegal immigrants on the coast of Palestine. On the night of 4 December 1947, a vessel with 182 immigrants ran the blockade and landed its passengers at Tel Aviv; on 1 January the vessel *UNO* landed 700 people to the north of Haifa. The British government issues 1,500 permits every month to Jewish immigrants on the island of Cyprus, where all vessels approaching Palestine with immigrants are directed. In fact, at the end of 1947 two steamships carrying 15,000 Jews from Black Sea ports were sent there.[4]

The British, having successfully blockaded the Palestine coast, prevented the Jews from receiving any significant amount of aid from abroad. Britain and the US fear an influx of immigrants from the countries of Eastern Europe.

The Arabs

The basic Arab feudal-bourgeois organizations – the Arab Higher Committee and the Arab Office – backed by the British, have spoken out against the creation of a Jewish state and the partition of Palestine. The United Nations resolutions on the Palestine question have provoked harsh reactions in Arab circles and have been marked by a three-day protest strike under the leadership of the Supreme Arab Committee.

Armed activity against the Jews was unleashed with new strength in December 1947 and still continues. Traitors and quislings from all over the world have begun to flood into Palestine and are taking part in the struggle on the Arab side, among them the riff-raff of Anders' army, Bosnian Muslims from DP camps in Germany, German prisoners-of-war who escaped from camps in Egypt and 'volunteers' from Franco's Spain.

The countries of the Arab League, following the resolutions of the League's Council,[5] are sending armed Arab units into Palestine. The first of these entered Palestine from Syria on 9 January 1948. It consisted of Syrian, Iraqi and Lebanese volunteers, who, having attacked two Jewish settlements, were forced to withdraw to Syria. This action was timed to coincide with the start of work by the UN Palestine Commission.

From January to March 1948, a large number of Arab units, which were mechanized and armed with mortars and automatic rifles, crossed the border of Palestine. For example, on 30 January, 800 well-armed Arabs in 50 trucks

4. Reference is to the ships *Pan York* and *Pan Crescent,* with the greatest number ever of illegal immigrants. Heavy British–American pressure was exerted on the Jewish Agency and the Romanian and Soviet authorities to stop the departure of the ships. The ships were eventually intercepted at sea and the immigrants deported to Cyprus.
5. See Doc. 110, n. 2.

crossed the Palestine-Transjordan border. These units are, for the most part, deployed in the hills of Samaria, with their headquarters in the town of Nablus, where the commander of the Arab volunteer armies, Fawzi Qawuqji is based at present. At the beginning of March, these Arab forces were estimated to number about 6,000 men, but according to Arab sources, there are almost 15,000. (N.B. According to Jewish Agency data, there are 2,500 Syrians, 2,500 Iraqis and several hundred Egyptians and Lebanese in Palestine). Arab police are abandoning their posts and joining the Arab forces, bringing their weapons with them.

The Arabs are receiving arms from Arab countries which are supplied by Britain. In March 1948, a mission from the Arab Higher Committee arrived in London to buy arms costing £500,000; it is expected that they will receive ten thousand machine-guns etc., which will be sent to Palestine through neighbouring Arab countries. In France they are stocking up with arms and tanks, which will be transferred to the Palestine Arabs through the Levant.

The Transjordan Arab legion, maintained and commanded by the British, is taking part in the fight against the Jews. The soldiers of the legion have been guarding one of the bridges across the Jordan River and have let a detachment of 700 Arabs enter Palestine unimpeded. The Arab League is the force inside Palestine with whose help Abdallah intends to seize the country after the expiry of the British Mandate on 15 May.

The leader of the Arab Higher Committee is the former mufti of Palestine [*sic*] who moved to Damascus in March in order to make direct contact with Arab units in Palestine. Although the Arabs regard the change in the US position as a 'moral victory', the mufti has spoken out against trusteeship for Palestine and repeated that the Arabs are determined to fight to the last man. A report of the Arab Information Bureau dated 26 March states that 'the Arabs will agree to the establishment of trusteeship only after the plan for the partition of Palestine is finally repudiated'.

Only the left-wing 'League of National Liberation' is speaking out against the bloody conflicts between the Arabs and Jews in Palestine.

Conflicts between Arabs and Jews

Armed conflict between Jews and Arabs has spread through the whole of Palestine. In the first 15 days of December 1947, each side suffered 100 killed and several hundred wounded. On the border between the Arab town of Jaffa and the Jewish town of Tel Aviv, there has been continuous street fighting for four months, with exchanges of fire between snipers, and forays by each side against the other. Traffic can travel along the roads only under heavily-armed guard. Jewish columns of vehicles between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv are subject to attack and robbery. The Arabs are carrying out systematic attacks on the Jewish settlements scattered in the southern desert of the Negev, destroying the irrigation pipes without which life in this waterless region is impossible.

The scale and cruelty of the bloody skirmishes are growing from day to day. On 30 December 1947, Jewish terrorists carried out a lawless act by

throwing a bomb into a crowd of Arabs standing at the entrance to the Anglo-Iraqi oil refinery in Haifa. Six Arabs were killed and forty wounded. The Arabs hit back with further bloody carnage, in which 41 Jews were killed. This took place under the eyes of the factory guard, formed by the Arab Legion, and of British officers.

In Jerusalem, where the population is mixed, Arab-Jewish clashes have become extremely fierce. The Hebrew University, the Hadassah hospital, the editorial offices of the *Palestine Post* newspaper, the house of the former mufti of Palestine [*sic*] which he handed over to Arab organizations, the Semiramis Hotel (the meeting-place of the Arab military organization al-Najjada[6] and a number of other buildings have been blown up. For several months 1,800 Jews have been under siege in Jerusalem's old city. This quarter, where the Jewish holy places are concentrated, is surrounded by Arabs and the supply of provisions to those under siege can be carried out only in British armoured cars. The disturbances in Palestine have led to the growth of banditry and robberies, and attacks on banks and trains.

The United States' declaration in favour of peace has produced the opposite effect: battles are flaring up all the time, the Arabs are employing cannon and machine-guns, and during a conflict at the end of March, the Jewish armed forces even had several aircraft at their disposal.

According to official data of the British administration, in the four months leading up to 1 April 1948 almost two thousand people were killed in Palestine, among them eight hundred Jews.

Recently the Arabs have turned to systematic operations against Jewish settlements scattered throughout the country. The settlements, situated in the Negev in the south and in Galilee in the north, are cut off from the main Jewish population of the coastal strip. Their defence, and even more the maintenance of contact between them, is a task almost beyond the strength of the semi-legal Jewish militia. Moreover, the Jews are deprived of aid from people outside and are bearing heavy losses of dead and injured, which will have a devastating effect on the resistance of this small community (only 640,000 people).

The British

The 'neutral' position of the British on the Palestine question can not hide their real aims, which are to wreck the UN resolution on partition by provoking internecine conflict between Arabs and Jews and to remain in Palestine as a third force, alone or together with the US, or to hand over Palestine to the King of Transjordan, who would keep it for Britain. The British police and army are therefore either doing nothing or are secretly assisting the Arabs in their struggle against the Jews. The Jewish newspaper *Davar* wrote in January 1948, 'The British want to organize such chaos that, by 15 May, large Arab gangs will be concentrated in the country, on the borders everything will be prepared for

6. A para-military organization founded by Arabs in Palestine in 1946.

an outright invasion and those who support the UN resolution will be deprived of weapons and unable to defend themselves.' The newspaper of the League of National Liberation, *al-Ittihad*, reported cases in which the British had tried to stir up the Arabs against the Jews; the British administration forbade reprinting this report, and the newspaper was closed down on 19 January.

British soldiers are selling weapons and ammunition to Arab detachments, and cases of 'lost' armoured cars have become more frequent. All this is being done against a background of reassuring statements by the British administration about their intention to maintain peace and order in the country. In fact, having opened up the borders of Palestine with neighbouring Arab countries (since guarding a few bridges over the Jordan, across which the Arabs move in trucks, would not be an impossible task for the hundred thousand-strong British army), Britain is strictly blockading the sea coast, thus preventing the Jews from receiving aid.

The evacuation of British forces from Palestine has hardly begun, although four months have already elapsed since the UN resolution on the gradual withdrawal of the mandatory power's forces. It was not until 7 March that the first party of 2,000 soldiers left the country.

The British, who hold all the Palestine people's assets, are demanding 74 million dollars from Palestinian funds to pay pensions for British bureaucrats, and have removed Palestine's gold reserves to London. In November 1947, the British administration allowed trading in state land in Haifa.

The refusal of the US to support the UN resolutions has made the speeches of the British more blunt. For example, the bureaucrats of the British administration in Palestine have proposed to the British Colonial Office that Jerusalem be divided along religious lines, that a British governor rule over the city and that officers of the secret police be selected from among British policemen.

Economic Life in Palestine

Armed conflict has paralyzed many aspects of economic life in Palestine. The railways and road transport are disorganized and the cost of transportation has risen considerably. A significant rise in the prices of foodstuffs and cattle-feed is noticeable, partly because of the difficulty of supply. If energetic measures are not adopted, Palestine will be faced with approaching famine in a few months' time. The Jews of Jerusalem are already receiving only 200 grams of bread a day per person. Industry has suffered to a much smaller extent.

Conclusions

1. The situation of the Jews in Palestine is deteriorating daily, since they are unable to receive aid in the form of manpower and arms. Nor can their heavy losses be made good in view of the small numbers of the Jewish population in Palestine.

2. The Arabs have been encouraged by aid from the Arab countries and Britain and by the US withdrawal of support for the UN resolution. They have begun a systematic attack on Jewish settlements and are trying to increase the area of their occupation and to capture the city of Jerusalem.

3. The British administration is giving aid to the Arabs and preventing the Jews from organizing their own defence.

Attaché of the Middle East Department
A. Semioshkin

119
A.A. Gromyko's Speech at the Second Special Session of the UN General Assembly[1]

Official Records of the Second Special Session of the United Nations, Vol. II, Main Committees, Summary Records of Meetings, 16 April–14 May 1948, pp. 17-20.

[New York] 20 April 1948

Mr. Gromyko (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) shared the anxiety felt by some representatives by reason of the fact that partition had not been carried out, that the Palestine question was being brought before the General Assembly for the third time and that one government was putting forth proposals which had the effect of nullifying the General Assembly's decision, and, further, promoted neither the interests of the people of Palestine nor the maintenance of international peace. According to the partition plan adopted by the General Assembly, certain steps were to be taken by the Palestine Commission with a view to establishing a Jewish state and an Arab state in Palestine.

The commission was to receive instructions and assistance from the Security Council. Yet the Council not only had not taken the necessary steps to implement the General Assembly's decision, but had made that task more complex.

Mr. Gromyko attributed the Security Council's inaction principally to the attitude of the United States, which was attempting to modify the General Assembly's decision. Whereas the United States had originally used all its influence to encourage the adoption of the partition plan, it had immediately afterwards changed its policy on the question. That change of attitude had been made clear as early as 9 December 1947 at the first meeting at which the

1. Due to the deteriorating relations between the Jewish and Arab communities in Palestine and increasing violence and disorder in the country, the US delegation, supported by the French and the Chinese, proposed at the Security Council on 19 March to replace the partition resolution by a temporary international trusteeship (see Editorial Note, p. 265). The Security Council in its resolution of 1 April 1948, requested that the secretary-general convene a Special Session of the General Assembly 'to consider further the question of the future government of Palestine'. The Second Special Session met from 16 April to 14 May 1948.

Security Council was to discuss measures to be taken for the implementation of the General Assembly decision.[2] Since 29 November 1947 when the partition plan was adopted, the United States had been preparing its own plan, which was officially submitted to the Security Council on 19 March 1948, and which provided for the establishment of a United Nations trusteeship in Palestine.

Since the close of the previous session of the Assembly, public opinion, even in the United States, had found that the position taken by that country on the Palestine question had really been directed against the General Assembly resolution. Official denials by the United States deceived no one; it was clear that the United States was preparing to deal a mortal blow to the partition decision and to present a new plan for Palestine. It was claimed that the new plan was better, although in reality the contrary was true. The argument had been put forward that the partition plan could not be implemented by peaceful means, but that argument could be sustained only if the Security Council had adopted practical measures for its implementation, and such was not the case.

The powerlessness of the Security Council during recent months had been the result of the attitude taken by the United States, the United Kingdom and certain other states. The Security Council had been marking time without producing any effective result. The decision it had taken on 5 March 1948 (document S/691) had been a mere invitation to the permanent members to submit recommendations to the Palestine Commission. It had also contained an appeal to the peoples and governments concerned to do everything possible to put an end to the disorders in Palestine. But it had given the Palestine Commission neither the assistance nor the necessary instructions for the implementation of the partition plan.[3] The appeal to governments and peoples to put an end to the disorders in Palestine had been ignored, for those to whom it had been made knew that they could continue to provoke with impunity.

Discussions among the permanent members of the Security Council had revealed that the United States not only did not wish to consider how the General Assembly decision might be implemented but wished to revise that decision.

---

2. At the Security Council meeting on 9 December 1947, the president (John Hood of Australia) read a letter from the secretary-general concerning the General Assembly resolution of 29 November. The secretary-general drew the attention of the Council to the paragraph pertaining to the Security Council in the operative part of the resolution. The president proposed that the Council take note of the letter without discussion. In the discussion that followed, the US delegate supported the president's proposal, while the USSR delegate proposed a more binding formula, suggesting that the Council accept the resolution and remain seized of the Palestine question. The Council finally adopted the following resolution: 'The Security Council received the letter from the secretary-general enclosing the resolution of the General Assembly concerning Palestine; and being apprised of the question, decided to postpone the discussion' (see *SC OR, Second Year*, 106th Meeting, pp. 2276–89).
3. This was the first substantive discussion in the Security Council of the Palestine issue. For the various positions of the Council's members and the resolution adopted on 5 March, see *Political and Diplomatic Documents, Companion Volume*, Editorial Note, pp. 93–5.

From the very beginning, the representative of the United States had been proposing consultation with the Jews and the Arabs as though no decision had ever been taken on Palestine. He had then tried to prove that it was impossible to implement partition by peaceful means but he had never mentioned that the Security Council had not exhausted the means available to it to implement the General Assembly decision.

The last resolution adopted by the Security Council with regard to a truce (document S/723)[4] was not being respected by those who, from the beginning, had determined to combat the General Assembly decision of 29 November 1947.

The representative of the USSR recalled that, after a thorough study of the question and consideration of all the other solutions suggested, the United Nations had reached the conclusion that the partition of Palestine into two states represented the most equitable solution. It was the most equitable because it was compatible with the national interests of both peoples of Palestine; it would settle relations between them once and for all and thus ensure the maintenance of peace in the Near East.

Mr. Gromyko pointed out that the struggle between the two peoples had grown in intensity during the period of the United Kingdom Mandate. The partition plan, which provided for close economic cooperation between the two states, could have put an end to that struggle.

Partition would also have terminated the semi-colonial regime in Palestine and would have recognized that the Jewish and Arab populations had reached a level of political, economic and cultural development which entitled them to establish independent states. Partition also satisfied the legitimate aspirations of the Jewish people which had suffered so much under the Hitler regime.

In the course of the present discussions, all those advantages of the partition plan should be borne in mind by everyone. Yet it seemed that certain states were guided neither by the needs of the population of Palestine, nor by the common interest of the United Nations, but by the political, economic, military and strategic interests of one or two powers. Those states were ready to sacrifice the aspirations of the peoples of Palestine if they did not tally with the interests of the rulers of the United States. The change in the United States' attitude towards the Palestine question had been dictated by the oil interests and the military interests of that country. Certain powerful circles behind those interests were trying to transform Palestine into a strategic and military base and into an economic dependent of the United States.

The trusteeship plan proposed by the United States was likely to lead to an intensification of the struggle in Palestine; it would create a threat to peace and would increase anxiety in the Near East. Moreover, trusteeship in Palestine was not compatible with the present cultural and political level of either Jews or

4. Reference is to the Security Council resolution of 17 April 1948 calling upon Arab and Jewish armed groups to cease all acts of violence in Palestine. For the discussion and the resolution in its entirety, see ibid., pp. 127–9.

Arabs. Such a plan was inconsistent with the right to self-determination of the peoples of Palestine and would place that country in a state of virtual colonial slavery, with all the deplorable consequences of such a state.

Finally, the United States plan placed the General Assembly in the false position of having adopted the partition plan with the active participation of the United States, after a long examination of the question, and of seeing it now exposed to the not disinterested political manoeuvres of the ruling American circles.

The USSR representative went on to accuse the mandatory power of having used every possible means of impeding the implementation of the General Assembly's resolution. It had prevented the Palestine Commission from going to Palestine, and by so doing had prevented it from taking the preparatory measures necessary for the implementation of the partition decision.

The commission had been authorized not to go to Palestine before 1 May – in other words, two weeks before the expiration of the mandate – and the United Kingdom had even refused to guarantee the commission's safety during those two weeks. The United Kingdom government had thus attempted to transform the Palestine Commission into an organ confined within the limits of discussion and without power to take any practical measures towards the implementation of the General Assembly's decision. In such a way the United Kingdom had jeopardized the whole plan. It had also ignored that part of the General Assembly's decision which stipulated the opening of a port for Jewish immigration as from 1 February 1948. All those facts, together with the Palestine Commission's report, proved that the United Kingdom was to a large extent responsible for the present complications in the problem of the future of Palestine. Despite all the efforts of the United Kingdom to justify its actions in Palestine, it was clear that its intention was to nullify the partition decision and thereby to favour those elements in the Near East which wished to destroy the partition plan. The mandatory power had not only failed to preserve elementary order in Palestine; it had even opened that country's frontiers to armed bands, which entered Palestine to wage an armed struggle against the implementation of the Assembly's decision.

The policies of the United Kingdom and the United States clearly had many points in common. The behaviour of those two countries in the Palestine question had dealt a serious blow at the authority of the United Nations, which indeed had long been ignored by the ruling circles of the United States. It was clear, too, that the responsibility for the present situation lay with the states which wished to frustrate the partition plan and to impose a solution dictated by the selfish interests of the ruling circles of the United States.

The USSR delegation would therefore vote against the new United States proposal for the establishment of trusteeship in Palestine.

The USSR delegation considered that the decision on the partition of Palestine was a just decision and that the United Nations should take effective measures to ensure its implementation.

120
M. Shertok to V.M. Molotov (Moscow)

TEL: ISA 130.02/2424/19
Tel Aviv, 15 May 1948

Have honour inform you and ask you bring to notice of your government that National Council for Jewish state, consisting of members of elected representative Jewish bodies of Palestine, met yesterday, May 14th, upon termination of British Mandate and on basis of resolution of General Assembly of United Nations of November 29, 1947, proclaimed establishment of independent Jewish state in Palestine to be called State of Israel. Council declared that State of Israel will be open to immigration of Jews from all countries of dispersion; will promote development of country for benefit of all inhabitants; will be based on precepts of liberty, justice and peace; will uphold full social and political equality of all citizens without distinction race, creed or sex; will guarantee full freedom of conscience, worship, education, culture and language; will safeguard sanctity and inviolability of shrines and holy places of all religions and will dedicate itself to principles of United Nations Charter. Council also declared that State of Israel will be ready to cooperate with organs and representatives of United Nations in implementation of resolution of [the General] Assembly of November 29th 1947, and will take steps to bring about economic union over whole of Palestine. Council called upon Arab inhabitants State of Israel to return to ways of peace and play their part in its development with full and equal citizenship and due representation in its governing bodies, provisional and permanent. Council also offered peace to all neighbouring states and their peoples, and invited them to cooperate with State of Israel for common good of all. On behalf of Provisional Government of Israel I hereby beg to request official recognition of State of Israel and its provisional government by Government of Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. I beg to express hope that such recognition may soon be forthcoming and am confident that it will strengthen friendly relations between Soviet Union and its peoples on one hand and State of Israel and Jewish people of Palestine on other hand, as well as serve cause of peace and justice in international relations generally. I take this opportunity of expressing feelings of profound gratitude and appreciation of Jewish people of Palestine, which are shared by Jews throughout world, for firm stand taken by USSR delegation to United Nations in favour of establishment of independent sovereign Jewish state in Palestine: for its consistent championship of this idea despite all difficulties, for its expressions of genuine sympathy with sufferings of Jewish people in Europe at hands of their Nazi tormentors and for upholding principle that Jews of Palestine are a nation entitled to sovereignty and independence.[1]

On behalf Provisional Government of Israel
Moshe Shertok, Foreign Secretary

1. A similar telegram was sent to all United Nations member-states (with the exception of the Arab states) and to some non-member states. For Soviet affirmative reply, see Doc. 122.

121
I.N. Bakulin to V.A. Zorin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.3, D.11, L.168
Moscow, 15 May 1948
Secret

To Comrade V.A. Zorin,

Until 1914 the Russian government had one consulate-general in Palestine (opened in Jerusalem in 1858) and two consulates – in Haifa (opened in 1842) and in Jaffa (opened in 1820).

In 1914, with the outbreak of World War I, all three consulates were closed and the buildings captured by the Turks.

In 1922, having been given the mandate for Palestine, Britain seized the building of the consulate-general in Jerusalem (this is the only building which is the property of the USSR) and used it as it pleased.

On 19 February 1947, Comrade Solod wrote to ask whether it might be expedient to re-open our consulate in Jerusalem.[1] However, in view of the Palestine problem this question was not taken up, the more so because permission to open this consulate would have had to be solicited from the mandatory power.

At present, with the end of the mandate and pending the establishment of diplomatic relations with Palestine, we should send one of the members of our legation in Lebanon as a representative of the mission to safeguard the property belonging to the USSR in Jerusalem.[2]

I. Bakulin

---

1. This document has not been traced. For earlier Soviet proposals to establish a consulate in Palestine see Docs. 25 and 46.
2. As the expiry of the mandate drew near, the British authorities passed control over Russian property in Palestine to the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission which was part of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (see Doc. 45, n. 3). On 8 May 1948 the Central Executive Committee of Slavs in Jerusalem (see Doc. 45, n. 4) requested the consuls of Czechoslovakia, Poland and Yugoslavia to extend protection to the property of the Orthodox Palestine Society. On the same day the Czechoslovak consul in Jerusalem, Jan Novak, cabled this request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague, which transmitted the information to Moscow. Proposing on 15 May 1948 to send a Soviet consular official from Beirut to Jerusalem, Bakulin presumably knew of the Prague telegram. However, his superiors preferred another solution. On 22 May 1948, Prague sent Jan Novak the following telegram: 'The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs agrees to the proposal that the consul general of Czechoslovakia, with the consuls general of Yugoslavia and Poland be given temporary custodianship of moveable property, real estate, archives and documents belonging to the Russian Orthodox Society, the directorship of which is in the USSR, until such time as the legal owner can take possession of this property. The Soviet Foreign Ministry would like to be apprised of any measures taken in this regard' (IS 130.11/2501/16).

122
V.M. Molotov to M. Shertok (Tel Aviv)

TEL: ISA 130.02/2391/5
[Moscow] 18 May 1948

I beg to confirm receipt of your telegram of 15 May in which you bring to notice of the government of the USSR the proclamation, on the basis of the resolution of the General Assembly of 29 November 1947, of the creation in Palestine of an independent State of Israel and request their recognition by the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics of the State of Israel and its provisional government.[1] I hereby beg to inform you that the Government of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics has adopted a decision officially to recognize the State of Israel and its provisional government. The Soviet government hopes that the creation by the Jewish people of its own sovereign state will serve the cause of the strengthening of peace and security in Palestine and the Middle East, and expresses its confidence in the successful development of friendly relations between the Soviet Union and the State of Israel.

V. Molotov
Minister Foreign Affairs, USSR

123
G. Kheifets to L.S. Baranov (Moscow)

COPY: GARF, F.8114, OP.1, D.792, LL.129–30.
Moscow, 18 May 1948
Most Urgent/Secret

The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks), to Comrade L.S. Baranov,[1]

In connection with the events in Palestine, the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee has been receiving appeals by telephone and in person to send volunteers to Palestine to 'take part in the struggle against the aggressors and fascists'.

The majority of those who appeal are speaking not only on their own behalf but also on behalf of their comrades at work or study.

Doc. 122
1. Doc. 120.

Doc. 123
1. During World War II, the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee was subordinated to the Soviet Information Bureau (see Doc. 21, n. 1). After World War II, the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee's activities were controlled by the Central Committee's departments of foreign affairs and propaganda. L.S. Baranov was deputy head of the Central Committee Department of Foreign Affairs.

The majority of the petitions are being received from students of Moscow higher educational institutions: the Institute of Law, the Chemistry Institute, the Foreign Languages Training College, the Institute of Chemical Machine Tooling and others.

There have been petitions from Soviet white-collar workers – engineers of the Stal'proekt Institute and the Ministry of Armaments and officers of the Soviet army. The petitioners justify their requests by their desire to help the Jewish people in the creation of a Jewish state, and in their struggle against the British aggressor.

Offers to collect funds in order to buy armaments have also reached the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.

On 17 and 18 May more than 20 people approached the committee in person.

An engineer, S.I. Furman, of the Steel Commission, aged 52, with his two sons (all of whom took part in World War II) wishes to 'fight against the aggressor'. A student, Anatolii Dun, according to his own account, has organized a sizable group of students from Moscow higher educational institutes who are ready to leave for Palestine immediately 'for the fight against the Arabs'.

An engineer specializing in building tanks (who did not give his name), a participant in the Civil War and World War II was also ready to leave immediately, as soon as he was called on. He asked that 'a Jewish brigade be organized urgently, before it is too late'.

A student, P.A. Levin, said that 80 students of the Moscow Institute of Law were ready to leave at once for Palestine.

Another student, M.N. Leizernok, said that he and 20 comrades, students at the Moscow Foreign Languages Training College, were ready to go to Palestine to 'take part in the fight against the fascists'.

I append a copy of a letter received by post on 18.5.[19]48.[2]

Deputy Executive Secretary of the
Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee
G. Kheifets

2. Cf. Doc. 126 and enclosures there.

124
M. Shertok to E. Epstein (Washington)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2308/1
[Tel Aviv] 22 May 1948

Please ask State Department of immediate reply regarding release fighter-bomber aircraft and anti-aircraft anti-tank artillery, yes or no. Also apply immediately Soviet embassy for transmission request Moscow similar assistance.[1] For your background, air raids Tel Aviv growing in frequency, intensity and damage, causing serious disruption industry, commerce, office work, schools. Morale time being superb, but fear serious deterioration if city continues virtually defenceless. Don't plead with State Department, only ask, but stress we determined obtain these weapons as it is a matter life death. Matter extremely urgent. Inform Weizmann.[2]

Shertok

125
V.M. Molotov to M. Shertok (Tel Aviv)

COPY: AVP RF, F.06, OP.10, P.46, D.622, L.17
Moscow, 25 May 1948

To Mr. Moshe Shertok, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Provisional Government of the State of Israel,

I confirm receipt of your telegram of 24 May 1948, in which you request the consent of the government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the State of Israel to establish its mission in Moscow without delay, and for a Soviet mission to be simultaneously established in Tel Aviv.[1]

I have the honour to report in this present letter that the Soviet government agrees that the State of Israel should establish a mission in Moscow headed by an ambassador or a chargé d'affaires, who would also perform consular functions. The Soviet government, in its turn, is ready to establish a Soviet mission in Tel Aviv.

Minister of Foreign Affairs
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics[2]
V. Molotov

Doc. 124

1. Sent in the wake of the provisional government's meeting of 20 May 1948, in which Mapam (United Workers' Party) ministers demanded that an urgent request for arms be addressed to all states and especially to the USSR (see ISA, Provisional Government, Minutes, 20 May 1948).
2. No documentation regarding formal applications by Epstein to the State Department or to the Soviet embassy has been found, but apparently off the record meetings with the Soviets were conducted (see Docs. 127 and 136). The matter was raised also at the Weizmann–Truman meeting of 25 May 1948 (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, No. 82, p. 77), with no immediate results; see also Doc. 136.

Doc. 125

1. See Doc. 120.
2. Typewritten note at the top of the page: 'To Comrade Stalin. For approval. 25.5'.

126
G. Kheifets to L.S. Baranov (Moscow)

COPY: GARF, F.8114, OP.1, D.8, LL.69–71, 74–5, 87–8, 91–2, 97–8
Moscow, 31 May 1948
Secret

To Comrade L. S. Baranov,

I am sending for your information, copies of statements and letters received by the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in connection with events in Palestine.[1]

Deputy Executive Secretary of the JAFC
G. Kheifets

APPENDIX A

Stavropol, 23 May, 1948

To the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, To Comrade I. Fefer,
Dear Comrades!

I am appealing to you with the confidence that I express the opinion of millions of Soviet Jews.

At present, an unprecedented change has taken place in our life. Our appellation of Jew has been elevated to the point where we have become a people equal to others. A small handful of Jews of the State of Israel are now conducting an intense struggle against Arab aggression. It is also a struggle against the British empire. It is a struggle not only for the independent State of Israel, but also for our future, for democracy and justice.

Why are we standing on the sidelines and not taking part in the just struggle of our brothers who are heroically fighting against the populous enemy!

I am appealing to you, the representatives of Soviet Jews. Do everything possible to create a voluntary legion of Soviet Jews under the slogan, 'For a democratic state in the Jewish country of Israel'.

I am sure that this appeal will unite many thousands of Jewish veterans of the Soviet army. I also believe that our Soviet government, the defender of all oppressed peoples, will react favourably to our idea.

Do not think that you are dealing with a Zionist. I am not a Zionist but a former member of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine and a political detainee of former Poland.

I hope that my letter will not be unique.

Our slogan – 'To the rescue before it is too late'. Please reply.

With comradely greetings,

Aron Perlmuter
4 Komintern St., Apt. 44
Stavropol, Caucasus

1. There are some twenty statements on file. Six representative ones are printed here.

APPENDIX B

Dear Comrade Fefer!

In the heart of the great Stalin and his friend Viacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov a place has been found for concern about even our unfortunate people. I cannot put into words the feelings of deepest gratitude to the genius of mankind, our dear Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin, for the support he has given to the newly formed State of Israel.

I was filled with pride for my homeland, the USSR and the Communist Party, of which I am a member.

The Soviet Union once again showed the entire world that it is the most staunch defender of all oppressed peoples. I believe that the Jewish people, which for centuries has been persecuted, destroyed, and dispersed all over the earth, will become as free and happy as all the peoples of the USSR. I believe that the Jewish State of Israel will not perish but will survive the struggle against British imperialists and their hirelings. I want to help the Jews who are fighting the interventionists, and I would like you to inform me whether it is permissible to send volunteers to the Jewish army. If this issue has not yet been decided, the government should be asked to permit the organization of a Jewish volunteer corps. We cannot stand on the sidelines when our blood brothers are perishing in an unequal fight.

My address: Kiev, 33 Prozorovskaia St., Apt. 71.

Captain (res.), Soviet Army, Abram Mikhailovich Serper

APPENDIX C

To the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, To Comrade I. G. Erenburg,

We, a group of Soviet Jews, turn to you as one of the leaders of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, the body which represents the Jewish community in the Soviet Union, with the following statement:

As Jews and citizens of the Soviet Union, we cannot remain indifferent to events in Palestine. This is a result not only of the completely understandable and legitimate sympathy towards our brethren in Palestine who are fighting for their right to national existence. It is also a result of our feelings as Soviet citizens, our sympathy for the liberation struggle of an oppressed people against imperialism. The struggle of the Jewish people in Palestine is just such a struggle despite the different class and ideological groupings taking part in this fight. This struggle is also an integral part of the struggle for democracy and peace which democratic forces are waging throughout the world.

The Arab countries, in collusion with the British government, are committing aggression against the recently proclaimed Jewish state in Palestine, which has been recognized by the Soviet Union and the US. This aggression constitutes illegal interference in the internal affairs of Palestine and at the same time a crude disregard for the Security Council resolution on the partition

of Palestine. Moreover, these actions are being carried out by countries which are UN members.

In this connection we are asking the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee to raise its voice in the name of all Soviet Jewry in defence of the legitimate rights of the Jewish people, against the violation of international obligations and against aggression and intervention.

It is now clear that the Arab troop advance has already been and will continue to be accompanied by acts of violence and terror and by mass murders of civilians. News of the bombardment of Tel Aviv and of the Arabs' extermination of the entire population of a conquered Jewish village are the first, but undoubtedly not the last, such reports. Mass terror, the extermination of the civilian population, murder of the elderly, women and children have always been the weapon of reactionary forces in the struggle against democratic and national-liberation movements, the instruments of imperialism. It is also well-known that mercenary units made up of SS butchers are fighting in the Arab armed forces.

We cannot accept the repetition in Palestine, even on a smaller scale, of the tragedy of the Jewish people in the past war. We ask the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee to raise its voice in protest against the new mass extermination of our brethren.

16 signatures

APPENDIX D

22 May 1948

To the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee of the USSR, honoured Comrades!

In Palestine the Arabs have attacked innocent Jews and are spilling innocent blood. This is the work of fascists from Britain and other capitalist countries who are seeking a path to power and are continuing Hitler's policy of exterminating our people.

We Jews, citizens of the Soviet Union, cannot remain indifferent to these events.

Mere moral support is not enough. We must organize a broad campaign to extend material aid to our fighting brethren. We must obtain government permission to enable the Jews who so desire to help our brothers in their fight.

I suggest the following:

1. The Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee should turn to the government in the name of Soviet Jews with a request for permission to collect money and other valuables for the Jews fighting in Palestine.

2. People who want to help our brothers in the fight should be permitted to go to Palestine in order to join the army.

3. Permission should be given for purchasing and dispatching arms and other military supplies to the Jewish government.

4. Branches of the Anti-Fascist Committee should be set up in all cities and regions of the Soviet Union; to begin carrying out these proposals.

Most regrettably, I am an invalid of the World War and my health does not permit my participating actively in the struggle. I am, however, prepared to do everything in my power. I am donating my monthly salary of 700 rubles and I call upon all Jews of the Soviet Union to follow my example and help the Jewish fighters with whatever is possible.

Hurry, comrades, with help before it is too late. Don't let the fire ignite – it must be extinguished from the first spark.

Don't allow fascism to spread – it must be stopped immediately.

For the freedom of all peoples!

Death to black reaction!

Zelman Toibich
2 Pushkin St., Apt. 2
Sverdlovsk

APPENDIX E

Leningrad, 19 May 1948

To the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee,

An Appeal

The treacherous policy of British imperialism, a policy of inciting inter-ethnic strife, has led to new bloody slaughter in the Near East. The Jewish people, who suffered enormous casualties during World War II, have earned the right to their own sovereign state. In spite of this, the bloc of Arab states, instigated, led and supported by Britain, attacked the newly formed Jewish state. In so doing it serves solely as an instrument of British imperialist policy in the Near East. Faithful to its principles of defending the rights of small peoples to self-determination, the Soviet Union from the very beginning adopted a firm position in support of the legitimate rights of the Jewish people and officially recognized the State of Israel. The Arab bands do not stop at the mass murder of civilians, they bomb peaceful settlements and exterminate the population on conquered territory, as occurred in the settlement of [Yagur].[2]

In this letter to the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee we want to express our deep outrage and indignation at the insolent act of aggression of the imperialist bloc against a state which offered peaceful co-existence to all Arab countries. We think that we express the opinion not only of the signatories to this letter but also of all Jews in Leningrad, as well as the entire Soviet Union.

2. Original reads 'Dangur', but reference is apparently to Yagur.

We request that the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee immediately begin an active campaign to extend aid to the Jewish state.

We propose to start collecting funds for aid to the Jewish people of Palestine, who are fighting against aggression.

The letter was signed by 21 people.

In view of the lack of time, not all of the many people who wished to were able to sign. Please reply via *Eynikeyt*.

APPENDIX F

17 May 1948

To the Presidium of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in the Soviet Union,

The recent events in Palestine have stirred public opinion throughout the world. Progressive mankind is attentively following the struggle of the young state of Israel against the League of Arab countries, satellites of Anglo-American imperialism.

The State of Israel was created by the Jews of Palestine on the basis of the UN General Assembly resolution of 29 November 1947. This resolution was adopted with the active support of the Soviet delegation and the delegations of the new democracies.

On the day that independence was proclaimed, the armies of six countries, equipped with American arms financed by British and American money, invaded Israel despite the UN resolution. In the ranks of the Arab armies are German fascists, Polish reactionaries from Anders' army and Spanish Falangists.

During the war the Jewish people suffered all the horrors of Nazi crimes. About six million Jews perished in concentration camps and the ghettos.

Progressive mankind considers that after all their deprivations and misfortunes the Jews have the right to create a national independent state. This opinion was expressed by the USSR's representative at the UN, Comrade Gromyko, and also by several progressive figures from other countries.

This supposition is not, however, supported by the British and US governments. Although the US also recognized the State of Israel, along with Britain, its shady behind-the-scenes machinations in Arab countries have not ceased, thus inciting national animosity between Jews and Arabs. The bloody events in Israel, along with the shooting of resistance fighters in Greece and the persecution of democratic organizations in South Korea and West Germany, are part of the reactionary policy of Anglo-American imperialists.

Soviet Jews are following the events in Israel with great attention.

We are interested in the position of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee on the events in Israel. We are interested in knowing what specific measures the

Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee proposes in order to help Israel in its struggle against the henchmen of Anglo-American imperialism. We ask the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee to speak out in the central press in protest against the invasion of Israel by the armies of the Arab states.

Students of Leningrad institutes of higher education
This statement was signed by 36 people.[3]

127
I.N. Bakulin, to V.A. Zorin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.L, L.3
Moscow, 5 June 1948
Secret

In connection with Comrade Gromyko's report about the requests of the representatives of the State of Israel Eliash and Hacohen to extend aid to the government of Israel,[1] it would be advisable:

1. To let the Czechs and Yugoslavs know confidentially via our ambassadors in Prague and Belgrade about the desirability of extending aid to the representatives of the State of Israel in the purchase and dispatch to Palestine of artillery and airplanes in view of the fact that, despite the Security Council resolution forbidding the import of arms to Arab countries, the latter have every opportunity to receive the requisite quantity of arms from British depots and bases in Transjordan, Iraq, and Egypt.

2. Not to permit representatives of the government of Israel to travel to the USSR from Czechoslovakia in order to conduct negotiations on purchasing airplanes in the USSR. Such talks could be conducted by the Israeli legation, the establishment of which has been approved by the Soviet government.[2]

I. Bakulin

Doc. 126

3. Document retyped from the original. This phrase replaced the actual signatures.

Doc. 127

1. See Doc. 124, n. 2.
2. The following handwritten note was appended to the bottom of the document: 'To Bakulin, we cannot operate with such a lack of caution. After all, we voted for a truce in Palestine. We must refrain from moves which could be used against us. V. Zorin, 6.6.' Another note at the top of the document: 'Register, put in file, I. Bakulin, 7.6.48'. See also Doc. 136.

128
Minutes of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee Meeting (Moscow, 7 June 1948)

COPY: GARF, F.-8114, OP.1, D.1054, LL.213-81

Present: Comrades Fefer, Khaikin, Rabinovich, Shimeliovich, Sheinin, Kvitko, Slepak, Novik.

Comrade Fefer
We are meeting today to consider a statement by the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee (JAFC) in connection with the events in Palestine. It is, of course, no accident that we have taken this name. We are a Jewish committee, representing Soviet Jewry. We cannot ignore what is happening in Palestine. It is clear to us that British and Nazi officers are serving in most of the Arab armies. For this reason we, as a Jewish committee, and as an anti-fascist committee, cannot remain neutral. That would be damaging in various ways, including our involvement in political life and our support of democratic organizations. Of course we cannot yet define our position with regard to the State of Israel. Some members of the Israeli government do not inspire confidence. What we must do today is determine our attitude to the act of aggression which is taking place in Palestine. Seven Arab states – Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, Transjordan and Saudi Arabia – have attacked the fledgling state, and this evil deed compounds the great losses which the Jewish people suffered during the war. We are receiving numerous letters about events in Palestine. We need not be directed by the views expressed in them, but must keep up to date with them. We would like to present some letters received from various groups. There are letters from students, doctors in the armed forces, etc. Some of them simply ask the question: 'What are you waiting for, comrades?'

We have received various proposals addressed to our committee. I mention these, not in order to endorse them – some of them are quite absurd – but because we must keep abreast of these attitudes.

Some letters raise the question of collecting funds to help the Israeli armed forces. A large number also speak of military support.

One thing that the authors of these letters do not understand is that when Gromyko speaks in the Security Council, he is not doing so on his own behalf, but in the name of the people. With regard to military support, he usually includes some impressive phrase, such as 'in the name of those who took part in the Civil War and World War II...'

While some letters express justified anger at the aggression, others are written in the spirit of bourgeois nationalism.

We have mentioned only a small sample of these letters. What do they show? They show that their authors fail to take account of either the circumstances, or the position, or the tasks of our organization. They do not

understand who the Soviet man is, nor what role he plays, nor what Soviet patriotism is at various stages of its development and under various circumstances. Only people who have no idea of the situation can talk about sending volunteers to Palestine today. Men and military units cannot be sent without the sanction of the government, and this would lead to the outbreak of war in the Middle East. The New Democracies are closer neighbours. Now Zionism, which had been in hiding, is coming into the open. This can be seen from the letters. People think that Zionism, which we have condemned, is going through a process of legalization. I think that our newspaper *Eynikeyt* should play a leading role. It should publish a series of articles which would encourage patriotism, in order to counteract the harmful attitudes of the inhabitants of Zhmerinka and others like them.[1]

As for the position of the JAFC , we cannot be led, but we cannot remain neutral either. We think that we must make our voice heard, and that it would be most effective to call a rally and broadcast it on the radio. The main task of this rally would be to unmask the Anglo-American imperialists. Its second task would be to appeal to the progressive organizations of the world to take more active measures and to wage a more decisive struggle against the governments of Britain and America, which are in fact conniving in the bloody affairs in Palestine. On the other hand, we must clear up the confusion which exists among certain strata of the Jewish population of our country. I believe that if we could manage to conduct such a radio rally in Russian, we would achieve a great deal. Then this discussion would give moral support to the Jewish army in Palestine, and would considerably help us to influence those strata in Palestine which we must influence, while our silence could cost us dearly. I believe that from every point of view – giving moral support to the Jewish population of Palestine, which is fighting aggression, struggling against reaction, and explaining our position to some of the backward strata here – such a radio rally could play a very important role. We must issue an appeal, or call, for a more decisive struggle against the vestiges of fascism, since the war in Palestine is a new challenge from reactionary forces. We have gathered here to think about these questions and to reach a decision on them.

Comrade Shimeliovich

What we have undertaken during this period is quite insignificant. We made a statement on events in Greece,[2] which was printed in *Pravda*; then we made a good appeal to Israeli President Weizmann;[3] but there, in effect, we came to a halt. I think that the members of the presidium, aside from mutes, feel that

1. In the second half of May 1948 *Pravda* received a letter from Zhmerinka, a town in the Ukrainian SSR, requesting that the Soviet government allow 500 Jews of that town to emigrate to 'our homeland in Israel'. For the letter, see the documentary collection by Redlich, *War, Holocaust and Stalinism*, pp. 384–5.
2. To protest against the execution of communist activists there, see ibid., p. 387.
3. Which was published in *Eynikeyt*, 20 May 1948 (see Ro'i, *Soviet Decision Making in Practice*, p. 305; Redlich, *War, Holocaust and Stalinism*, p. 399).

they should do something. I sat on the committee and spoke to a former army intelligence officer, who had come to the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee to offer his services for Palestine. I had to intervene in the conversation. The officer had no clear idea of what could and what could not be done. But it is plain to see that all these letters which are reaching the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, and which will continue to reach it, cannot be given written answers, and that the proposals made in them are all quite unacceptable, because people do not understand that the despatch of military personnel, volunteers and so forth, cannot be carried out by our country alone, and that this would lead to the outbreak of another war. It is clear, too, that the committee cannot at present initiate a campaign for collecting funds for the State of Israel. However, it would clearly be quite unforgivable from every point of view if we did not mobilize public opinion and the whole of progressive Jewry outside our own country on this issue. This would be quite unforgivable. Every day that passes is damaging to our cause and to our committee as a public organization. That is why I have this idea of an appeal. In fact, I have in mind two appeals. One would be addressed to all progressive Jewish organizations, would aim to mobilize Jewry, and would take the form of a protest against the American and British government policies. I also thought about an appeal to progressive Jews in America and Britain. We must also not fail to mention that the Nazis, Anders' troops, etc. are taking part in this aggression.[4] Unfortunately, I do not know what our friends are doing. In America we have a number of progressive organizations, but I have not heard their voice. Perhaps we should send several appeals. I am in favour of a radio rally. The author of one of the letters which reached the committee proposes the establishment of a Jewish committee for aid to the Israeli armed forces. I would not oppose a campaign of that sort in America for aid to the armed forces of Israel.

That is why I had the idea that we should organize a meeting with progressive public figures closest to us. Perhaps we should meet Goldberg[5] about this, or perhaps we should go to the New Democracies; anyway something must be done. My proposals are these: a radio rally and one or two appeals. I don't know whether the appeal to Weizmann has yet been printed. (Comrade Fefer: We have already had the first responses to this appeal.) But we must do this immediately, for every day that passes badly damages our cause.

Comrade Sheinin

We have here many letters which have arrived addressed to the committee, among them a letter from the citizens of Zhmerinka. We must pause to consider seriously the attitudes expressed in this letter. These are harmful

4. See Doc. 111 and n. 2 there.
5. American journalist Ben-Zion Goldberg visited the USSR as a guest of the Anti-Fascist Committee in 1946.

attitudes, which discredit not only us Bolsheviks, but all Soviet citizens. The Jews have found their homeland here, and it is only in the Soviet Union that they feel themselves to be citizens with equal rights. Then suddenly we get a letter from a group of Jews in Zhmerinka, asking for permission to emigrate to their homeland in Palestine. This is unheard of and disgusting. We must struggle against such attitudes. We must come down hard on them. We need a number of good, hard-hitting articles on Soviet patriotism in the newspaper *Eynikeyt*, and in a whole series of pamphlets on this issue. The radio rally is also very appropriate in this respect, for combatting such attitudes. I think we must also carry out educational work regarding this letter, since people do not understand. We must explain it thus: we must not spell it out, but let people read between the lines. People here have quite rightly spoken of turning to democratic organizations and to the New Democracies. This will help our common cause. It is a subtle and delicate matter. Our friends must hear our voice. On the other hand, we must show all those who want to drag us into the mire that we won't go along with them.

Comrade Rabinovich
As for events in Palestine, our paper has had to consider printing material more frequently about what is happening in and around Palestine. Since these events began, we have printed a number of articles: Comrade Goldberg's piece on Palestine; Comrade Fefer's article, immediately after the proclamation of the Jewish state; and Colonel Fadeev's survey of military actions, which was, to judge by our readers' responses, a good piece of work. It gives a fairly detailed examination of the balance of forces and the material strengths of the Jewish army and the Arab armies. There have been articles giving a clear picture of the theatre of operations in Palestine. On Saturday we printed a very good article by Maev entitled, 'After the Security Council Resolution'.[6] All the facts of the recent period are consolidated and the 'i's dotted. Here the main target is American policy; it is emphasized that American policy is in no way different from British policy. We have reached agreement with a number of highly qualified authors from the general staff and other authoritative institutions and with comrades who deal with Middle East affairs. They will give us systematic surveys of military activity and events. In this respect we have been more or less successful. At present we are concerned about what we should do with the numerous letters addressed to the editor. We have received a great many letters.[7] Like the letters to the committee, most of them put the question correctly. They give an accurate evaluation of the Soviet government's policy. They raise the question of giving financial assistance. For instance, the author of one letter proposes to organize contributions for a loan. He had found in a newspaper that contributions for a loan were being collected in

6. V. Maev, 'Noch der rezoliutsie funm Gefarlozikeit-Rat vegn Palestina', 5 June 1948.
7. See Doc. 126 and appendices there.

Palestine.[8] Many offer their savings for the purchase of clothing. Some suggest a petition to the [Soviet] government urging it to help the State of Israel. Along with these there are anti-patriotic and profoundly nationalistic letters. I don't want to be repetitive, for Isaac Solomonovich [Fefer] has already read us one letter. I just want to quote from one other:

We Jews of the USSR cannot and must not play the part of disinterested observers, but must quickly give all the aid we can in men and materiel (just as Minin and Pozharskii did).[9] I can't imagine any other attitude to the Palestinian Jews, for although we are citizens of the USSR, we all understand that this is to be seen as a temporary phenomenon (although it has lasted for many centuries). Citizen Shertok emphasized this in his note to Comrade Molotov in which he thanked the USSR on behalf of the Jews of the entire world. He is right on both counts...[10]

What are we to do with this letter? We have a rule that every letter must be answered. The authors propose that their letters be printed. We can't do that, but we must answer them. What has the editorial board done to give a political rebuttal to such attitudes? We have sketched out a plan of topics. Tomorrow there will be a big editorial, entitled 'Our Socialist Homeland'. This article deals with the homeland in general, and 70–80 per cent of it is about what the homeland has given to the Jews. We write about our mighty socialist homeland. This homeland is mother to all the peoples of the USSR, and is the pride of Soviet people. Then there is another article, which the author still has to complete: 'The National Pride of Soviet People'; then one entitled 'The Moral Attitude of Soviet Man'; and another, 'The Mighty Power of Soviet Patriotism'. All this is by way of propaganda. Other aspects were discussed at our last emergency meeting, when we decided that there must be more emphasis on patriotism in all our published material.

Comrade Sheinin
Perhaps the paper [*Eynikeyt*] should be published in Russian as well as Yiddish.

Comrade Rabinovich
The paper comes out only in Yiddish. People who don't know Yiddish read about events in Palestine with help from their comrades. People often ring us up and ask why *Eynikeyt* is not available at the newsstands. Comrade Kvitko suggested that we should print ardent, fiery poems. We got a poem from Pinchevskii in Chernovtsy. He had read it to the town assembly in Chernovtsy.

---

8. A national war loan aimed to finance military expenses and the establishment of the administration for the forthcoming Jewish state was opened to subscription on 11 May 1948.
9. Leaders of a popular resistance movement during the Polish occupation of Moscow in 1612, their memory was later revived as a symbol of opposition to foreign intervention. A Minin-Pozharskii monument was erected in Red Square in Moscow in 1818. A film entitled *Minin and Pozharskii* was produced in 1939.
10. Doc. 120.

He was told there that they would not print it, and he sent it to us in the hope that we would. It is a poem about Palestine and some lines are unworthy of a patriotic Soviet writer. He represents Israel as his homeland. Clearly, the paper must strengthen the spirit of patriotism and elevate the role of the motherland in the eyes of those of its readers who do not understand this. The letter I am talking about came to us from *Pravda* with a cover note to the effect that it was being sent to *Eynikeyt*.

I think that what the Presidium is doing is very important, especially with regard to the radio rally.

Delegations of people who know that I work for *Eynikeyt* come to see me on their day off. They think that I listen to the Voice of Israel on the radio. We must step up our propaganda work.

Comrade Khaikin

I would like to throw some light on our propaganda work in connection with recent events. We do not have a complete picture of these, but from the information which does reach us, we can see the following. The proclamation of the Jewish state aroused a storm of protest, which was linked to the imperialists' policy in Palestine. After Weizmann's talks with Truman,[11] this wave of protest diminished. Then from 1 June another strong protest began. The weakness of these first two waves of protest was that their fire was directed mainly against Britain, while nothing was said in America about the American imperialists' activity. The role which American circles play in Palestine was not mentioned. There have been a number of protest demonstrations in American cities. But responsibility for what is happening in Palestine rests with reactionary circles in America. There was a big public meeting in the US, at which one of the guest speakers was Taft,[12] the Jewish people's 'best friend' and a new candidate for the presidency in the forthcoming elections.

The whole of the committee's propaganda work about Palestine in the last two months has been to throw light on the policy, role and activity of American ruling circles and of Britain. In the past two weeks we have sent out four or five articles from the Soviet press on military actions in Palestine; and in order to inform and give guidance to public opinion in Palestine itself, we have been sending the articles by telegraph.

We are now taking steps to give more information about the life of the peoples of the Soviet Union, the Leninist-Stalinist policy of the friendship of peoples, and the situation in the Jewish Autonomous Region, so that the position of Soviet Jews should not be left unmentioned, and should not disappear from the pages of progressive papers abroad, especially since there is a real danger that this might happen.

11. For the Truman–Weizmann meeting on 25 May 1948, see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, Nos. 82, 83, 91, pp. 77, 78, 83.
12. Senator Robert A. Taft, Republican presidential candidate, had been co-author of the Taft–Wagner resolution dated 1 February 1944 (see Doc. 33, n. 2). He denounced the American embargo on arms to Palestine.

Now a few words about the paper *Eynikeyt*. Comrade Rabinovich is right in what he proposes. But I think that although the articles must maintain a didactic element, they should not give the impression that the paper should carry on the struggle within the borders of the Soviet Union. The educational side of these articles is very important. We must carry a series of articles explaining that it is not a matter of immigration; we must show which classes of the Jewish population need Palestine – that is, displaced persons with no citizenship and those Jews who are in camps in the British and American zones of occupation [in Germany and Austria]. Here we have in mind the victims of fascism who are still in camps.

Comrade Kvitko
Of course I think that our leaders have unmasked the British and American diplomats so wonderfully that we cannot compete with them. They have managed to crush them so thoroughly that we cannot think of anything better. This is the best answer and the best way to expose the warmongers. Our diplomats speak well enough. But I think a meeting is very important, indeed, I see no other way to speak out. We cannot gag people who don't understand what is going on around them. This is real hysteria. The sort of people who have kept quiet until now think that they can emerge from underground and speak out legally. Our fire must be directed against them. We have been compromised by keeping silent until now. But now the most important task for our propaganda is to address our own people. The Soviet people have spilt much blood in defence of their beautiful homeland. We have a marvellous Soviet homeland.

Comrade Shimeliovich
What are the authorities in Zhmerinka and the Zhmerinka town council doing?

Comrade Kvitko
The main task of our meeting will be to define the dual targets of our fire and our strongest arguments. First comes our own Jewish population, to whom we must carefully explain everything we have to do. Then come the Palestinian Jewish fighters, who must know our views – the views of the Soviet public – on these events. These are the two targets. We must also remember our American organizations, which are aware of these views. Our American friends understand fully that the Jewish people in Europe and America would not feel as they do without the Soviet Union. In my opinion we must let every Jew in the Soviet Union know our attitude to all these events and must explain them correctly. All our fire on these matters must be directed at American and British imperialism. I think that our representatives at the United Nations are doing this admirably. The most important thing is to explain to some of our Jewish citizens that their homeland is here in the Soviet Union.

Comrade Fefer
Allow me to summarize the discussion of this subject and outline a draft resolution. I do not see any disagreement among us on these questions. Are there disagreements in the Presidium on the evaluation of the situation in Palestine? No, there are not. Do we differ in our appraisal of Anglo-American imperialism in Palestine? There are no such disagreements. Are there differences in our estimate of the morality of the State of Israel? There are no such differences. Are there differences about our future position? No, there are none. Everyone thinks that the committee should speak out and make its voice heard on events in Palestine. Are there differences about the organization of the radio rally? There are not. Everybody agrees that we should hold such a rally. Are there differences among us regarding the appeal? There are no differences in principle, only a few nuances. Of course we shall hold consultations about this and will not do anything without consultations. Are there differences about the political aims of our radio rally? Everyone agrees that the rally must strike a heavy blow against the warmongers. What is going on in Palestine is happening at the behest of Anglo-American imperialism.

Further. We all think that our radio rally must call on progressive people throughout the world to come out more strongly against what the British and American governments are doing. This rally is also exceptionally important for our foreign policy. Only the future will show what position this government will adopt in international politics: whether it will follow the New Democracies or go another way. As for our relations with the Jewish people of Palestine, it is plain that the radio rally will increase both their sympathy for the Soviet Union and our influence on the masses there.

In the radio rally we must speak about the role of the Soviet Union in saving the Jewish people, the role of the Stalinist friendship of peoples, and the links with the great Russian people. In a word, this whole complex of questions to do with Palestine is perfectly clear, and there is no disagreement among us.

I now propose the following:
1. We should raise the matter of calling a radio rally in Moscow with the appropriate authority.[13]
2. We should issue an appeal to progressive Jewish public organizations.
3. We should instruct *Eynikeyt* to give systematic coverage to the role of the great Soviet socialist homeland in the struggle for peace and security, in saving the Jewish people and in helping the democratic peoples of the whole world in their struggle for peace and security.
4. We should strengthen *Eynikeyt*'s struggle against nationalist attitudes and distorted views of the UN's important resolution.

---

13. In the Russian original: *instantsiia* – a euphemism for the Communist Party Central Committee in Soviet administrative and party discourse.

All this must be done with some political tact, just as we have been taught. Then we must ask the Writers' Bureau to send a brigade of writers to Zhmerinka to organize a series of literary evenings, and we should arrange with the Union of Soviet Writers to conduct a number of literary evenings and to send writers to Odessa, Zhitomir, Zhmerinka and so forth.

With your permission I shall read a letter to the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Comrade Suslov, about the radio rally.

(Comrade Fefer then reads the letter.)

What comments are there on the choice of speakers and on the text?

Comrade Shimeliovich
We must shorten the text. I wouldn't tell Comrade Suslov that the rally should help overcome mistaken attitudes among the Jewish population. I would simply leave that out.

Comrade Fefer
It would be embarrassing and improper to leave it out. Such attitudes are known to exist.

Comrade Shimeliovich
We should say that we must overcome misguided attitudes about the despatch of volunteers and arms.

Comrade Fefer
We are not going to get into arguments with Zhmerinka. We shall have to say that the radio rally must dispel the mistaken ideas of certain sections of the Jewish population. We must raise the matter of our statement and appeal to progressive organizations abroad in connection with events in Palestine. We think it best to devote the radio rally in Moscow to these events.

Comrade Kvitko
I don't like that phrase about a new wave of sympathy for the USSR.

Comrade Fefer
Let's leave it out then.

Comrade Shimeliovich
I wouldn't say that the radio rally would help to popularize the Soviet Union's foreign policy.

Comrade Fefer
Let's talk about who's to speak. Zaslavskii stays. Simonov replaces Leonov. That sounds better. Academician Volgin's writings against antisemitism have

been very popular. The writer Bergelson must take part. Then Polina Gel'man – a woman and a Hero of the Soviet Union. We have deliberately not included Ia. Kreizer and D. Dragunskii. Ili'a Erenburg must take part – he's very popular, then Dr. Shimeliovich, the shock worker Veniamin Katamanin, the writer Kvitko and Academician Tarle instead of Frumkin. Academician Tarle is very popular.

Comrade Rabinovich
I have an addition to propose. These speakers represent the committee, but the newspaper is the organ of the committee. Wouldn't it be a good idea to include the editor?

Comrade Fefer
I don't think that plays any part. What do you think about including Rabbi Shlifer?

Comrade Khaikin
He could play a big part; a statement from him would be very important with regard to certain attitudes. He is both chief rabbi and representative of the Moscow community.[14] It is expected that the rally will last two hours, but I wonder if that isn't too long.

[...][15]

129
M. Shertok to E. Epstein (Washington)

CODED TEL. 10/57; OUTG.: ISA 130.09/2329/22
Tel Aviv, 9 June 1948

Please approach USSR New York or Washington wherever preferable, with request facilities for special mission visit Moscow discuss question purchase military equipment and food-stuffs. Tentative composition: Namir, Ben-Aharon, Perlson. This is ad hoc pending legation. If agreeable, above will proceed Prague or Warsaw for visas.[1] Matter urgent. Cable, inform Golda [Meyerson].[2]

Shertok

Doc. 128

14. Solomon (Shlomo) Shlifer was rabbi of Moscow's Choral Synagogue.
15. The concluding section which contains a summary of the discussion and relates to administrative matters, has been omitted.

Doc. 129

1. See Doc. 124 and n. 2 there. This mission did not materialize. Namir visited Romania in July 1948 by himself to discuss oil supplies and immigration – see Doc. 132.
2. Golda Meyerson, minister-elect to the USSR, was then on a fund-raising mission to the US.

130
Memorandum by A. Levavi

COPY: CZA S25/5634
Jerusalem, 13 June 1948

URGENT TASKS OF THE EAST EUROPEAN DIVISION

(A) The urgent tasks of the East European Division arise from the following basic facts:
1. The Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia and Hungary have recognized the State of Israel *de jure*, and have expressed their willingness to maintain normal diplomatic relations.
2. Other countries in the Eastern bloc, such as Bulgaria, Romania and Finland, may follow suit.
3. The East European bloc is one of the world's major concentrations of power.
4. In certain circumstances, we may need the direct and full support of the East European bloc in all areas of national affairs (policy, economy, defence, etc.), or partial [support] in specific spheres. There are signs that such assistance may be given under certain conditions and to a certain degree.
5. The East European bloc is of immense economic importance for Israel. Maritime transportation between Israel and the countries of the East European bloc could be improved easily.
6. In some countries of the East European bloc there is still an extensive Jewish community, which is in part a reservoir for immigration.
7. In several countries of the East European bloc Jews hold important government posts, some of whom are inclined to assist Israel.
8. A very large proportion of the Jewish community in Israel immigrated from countries of the East European bloc. As a result, a certain cultural and social affinity exists. In many cases there are still family ties between citizens of Israel and their relatives who still reside in Eastern Europe.
9. The Middle East is outside the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union.
10. The Soviet Union does not accept its alienation from the Middle Eastern political arena, a region which effectively borders on its political spheres of influence and is rich in oil, the strategic raw material which the USSR probably needs more than any other. Hence the American–Russian and Anglo-Russian tension over Middle Eastern issues. Russian policy in the Middle East is cautious in character at the present, but it is not a policy of concessions and ultimate resignation.
11. Communist elements are operating in most Middle Eastern countries. They are brutally persecuted by Arab rulers, but the socio-political background is fairly conducive to their development. Their rapid rise under certain circumstances cannot be ruled out.

12. Soviet policy in the Middle East has recently been supportive of ethnic minorities, particularly Armenians and Kurds, as well as the Lebanese [*sic*], to a certain degree.
13. Communist elements among Jews in Israel are weak. They are not persecuted and they are not outlawed, but social conditions are not conducive to their rise. Only in a state of a political-military emergency are they liable to become a major factor in Israel.
14. The general orientation of the government of Israel is to preserve the friendship of the United States, while endeavouring not to clash with the interests of the East European bloc. At present Israel faces danger from the third of the major powers: Britain. Our aspiration, therefore, is to become a factor that moderates potential tension between the United States and the Soviet Union regarding the Israeli issue.

(B) 1. The primary task of the East European Division is to help organize Israel's diplomatic representations in all the East European bloc countries that recognize us. In particular, the division should deal with administrative arrangements, set up the communications system, assure the constant flow of letters and cables, concentrate the information arriving from the legations and transfer information to them, and if possible give advice regarding the messages that are sent to the legation.
2. The division should help handle missions of East European countries that will be located in Israel's capital. Since those countries have not recognized Transjordan, their representatives may move from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv in the near future. The division will maintain the day-to-day contacts with these legations, ensure their comfort, supply them with information, aid them in consular affairs, put them in touch with various ministries and government institutions, prepare meetings between heads of legations and the foreign minister, and so forth.
3. The division will be involved in sending unofficial representatives to countries of the East European bloc which have not yet recognized Israel, in order to conduct negotiations for the establishment of normal diplomatic relations.
4. The division will deal with publishing material in the languages of the East European bloc with the following purposes:
   (a) to express friendship for the peoples of those countries;
   (b) to pave the way for economic and cultural ties;
   (c) to provide information about Israel;
   (d) to strengthen indirectly the ties with the Jewish communities.
5. The division will systematically collect current information on the countries in question and guide the basic research on them to be conducted by the Foreign Ministry's Research Division.
6. The division will be in contact with the Foreign Ministry's intelligence unit on matters relating to countries of the East European bloc.

7. The division will collect and handle ongoing information on our political and economic relations with the countries of the East European bloc and from time to time will draft proposals on the subject.

[...][1]

A. Levavi

131
I.N. Bakulin and M. Buev to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.15, LL.6–7
Moscow, 16 June 1948
Secret

To Comrade A.Ia. Vyshinskii,

In addition to our memorandum of 17 March of this year,[1] we have to report:

As can be seen from the letter of 24 April from Comrade Borisov, deputy minister for foreign trade of the USSR, the income of the USSR from parcels sent from Palestine amounted to a total of 1,056,000 rubles at the foreign exchange rate, with 15,845 parcels arriving during this period. If agreement with Palestine is reached about parcels, their number, as Comrade Erigin, director of the International Directorate of the Ministry of Communications, has told us by telephone, will increase to 20,000 per annum, which will augment the USSR's income in foreign currency; and there will be no expenditure on our side.

Since the Turkish postal service has agreed to the transit of parcels through Turkey (see the letter from the Palestine postal service), and that we shall incur no transit expenses, it would be economically advantageous for the USSR to conclude such an agreement. However, since the British Mandate in Palestine came to an end on 15 May 1948, and Palestine has been divided into two independent states, at present it is not possible to reach an agreement on parcels, since it is not known which of the two states on Palestinian territory will want to set up such an exchange.

Draft reply to [Minister of Communications] Comrade Psurtsev attached.

We shall be grateful for your approval.[2]

Bakulin,
M. Buev

Doc. 130

1. The last paragraph, dealing with the organizational structure of the East European Division, has been omitted.

Doc. 131

1. See Doc. 115 and notes there.
2. Handwritten note by Vyshinskii: 'From which part of Palestine do the bulk of the parcels arrive? If from the Jewish, an agreement can be made with the Jewish state. A. Vlyshinskii], 17.6' (see also Doc. 135).

132
M. Shertok to E. Epstein (Washington)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2329/22
Tel Aviv, 16 June 1948

View critical situation fuel are sending special emissary Romania negotiate purchase benzine. Tanker should arrive during truce. Ask Soviet support our application Romanian government this regard. Shall cable name representative separately.[1]

Shertok

133
E. Epstein to M. Shertok (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2513/15
[Washington] 18 June 1948

Today informed Soviet embassy contents your telegrams number 11/37[1] and 12/87[2] for transmission Moscow. Embassy asked transmit you following message from Molotov: Russian government wishes to appoint Pavel Ivanovich Ershov as their minister for Russia, 'poslanik', to Israel. Ershov born 1914, educated high humanitarian. Between 1941 to 1944 held responsible posts Foreign Office, between 1944 to 1946 counsellor Soviet embassy Turkey, last two years chargé d'affaires in Turkey. Suggest you reply Molotov via embassy here. Please advise whether prior public announcement Meyerson appointment you informed Moscow and received their reply.[3]

Epstein

Doc. 132

1. See Doc. 129. For Namir's account of his mission to Romania, see *Shlihut beMoskva,* pp. 28–35.

Doc. 133

1. Doc. 132.
2. Shertok to Epstein (16 June 1948, ISA 130.09/2329/9) informing him that *Trud* had published the exchange of telegrams between Molotov and himself stating that the Soviet Union had received Israel's application for an exchange of envoys and expressed its agreement thereto.
3. See Doc. 134.

134
M. Shertok to E. Epstein (Washington)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2513/15
[Tel Aviv] 20 June 1948

Pleased accept their appointee.[1] Regarding ours [Golda Meyerson] have made no public announcement yet but press reported rumours. Please inform officially for transmission: age 50, came Palestine 1921 from United States, pioneered on land then elected member Executive General Federation Jewish Labour for which went on numerous missions abroad. 1946 elected by Zionist World Congress member Executive Jewish Agency for Palestine and became head Political Department Jerusalem. Now on special mission United States. Check with her on above. Am cabling her direct.

Shertok

135
A.Ia. Vyshinskii to N.D. Psurtsev (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.15, L.8
Moscow, 23 June 1948
Secret

To the Minister of Communications of the USSR, Comrade N.D. Psurtsev,
Re yours No. 2689 of 6.3.1948

In answer to your letter about the conclusion of an agreement with Palestine on an exchange of parcels, the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs requests that the Ministry of Communications report with which part of Palestine (Jewish or Arab) the Soviet Union exchanged more parcels in 1947.[1]

USSR Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
A. Vyshinskii

Doc. 134
1. See Doc. 133.

Doc. 135
1. On 30 June 1948, Minister of Communications N. Psurtsev replied to Vyshinskii that the parcels were sent exclusively from the Jewish part of Palestine, namely from the cities of Tel Aviv and Haifa (see AVP RF, f.089, op.1, p.2, d.15, l.11).

136
M. Shertok to E. Epstein (Washington)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2329/22
Tel Aviv, 23 June 1948

Was not informed in time Hacohen's conversation with Grom[yko] and negative reply on account of truce.[1] Please approach them again, either you or Eban, suggesting they might discuss with us now sale planes, other heavy equipment for delivery after truce if terminates, indicating truce terms do not prohibit purchase arms abroad.

Shertok

137
G.G. Karpov to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.12, LL.3–4
Moscow, 24 June 1948
Secret

To the USSR Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Comrade A.Ia. Vyshinskii,

On behalf of the council, I enclose for your information a copy of a telegram from Patriarch Timotheos of Jerusalem addressed to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksii.[1] Patriarch Aleksii has decided not to take any steps as a result of this message.

Enclosure: See text

Chairman of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church attached to the Council of Ministers of the USSR[2]
Karpov

Doc. 136

1. See Docs. 124, 127.

Doc. 137

1. The Patriarch of all Russia, Aleksii, visited the Middle East (Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt) in June 1945. In Palestine he was hosted by the Patriarch of Jerusalem Timotheos, of the Greek Orthodox Church. A report of a Jewish Agency observer notes that at consultations between Patriarch Aleksii, Metropolitan Nikolai of Kiev and an unnamed official of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church on the one side, and Patriarch Timotheos, Patriarch Alexandros, Archimandrites Athenagoras and Benjamin, on the other, 'a proposal that representatives of the Holy Synod in Moscow should join a committee for guarding the holy places was favourably received' (see The Visit of the Russian Patriarch to the Near East, unsigned memorandum, 2 July 1945, CZA S25/486).

   In May 1948 Aleksii sent a letter inviting Timotheos to visit Moscow, which the Soviet Minister in Lebanon, Solod, transmitted to the Yugoslav chargé d'affaires, Victor Vidmar, to deliver to Timotheos (see I. Bakulin to G. Karpov, 6 July 1948, AVP RF, f.089, op.1, p.2, d.12, l).
2. The Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church was founded in 1943.

APPENDIX

Translation from English,[3] 23 June 1948
Telegram, Beirut, 21.13–30

To the Patriarch of Russia Aleksii, Moscow.

We have received information from reliable sources that the Custos Terrae Sanctae[4] has petitioned that the United Nations should, in addition to the protection mentioned above,[5] appoint an administrator[6] of the Free City of Jerusalem,[7] and that a volunteer corps of the Police Guard should be formed to guard the holy places.[8]

The Greek Orthodox Patriarch protests against this proposal and against any similar action by the Franciscan Guard. Although he does not want to interfere in any way in the administrative affairs of the authorities of the Holy City of Jerusalem, he nevertheless reminds us that the rights of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, as guardian of the holy places, were established four hundred years ago,[9] and that, therefore, he alone has the right to ensure the protection of the holy places in future, as he has done in the past,[10] should any such necessity arise.

Timotheos, Patriarch of Jerusalem

---

3. This text has been re-translated into English from the Russian text.
4. In the Russian text *predstavitel'stvo Rima po okhrane Sviatykh Mest.* This Latin title Custos Terrae Sanctae (custodian of the holy places) was held at that time by Father Albert Ghouri, head of the Franciscan order in Palestine.
5. The reference may be to the role played by the Custos in May 1948. During the siege of the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem by the Arab Legion, Father Ghouri served as mediator between Arabs and Jews. The terms of surrender conveyed by the Custos to the Jewish side in the evening of 18 May 1948 contained, *inter alia*, point 4, which read: 'All sacred places to be put under the custody of the Latin Patriarchate or the Muslim Supreme Council, or both (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, p.49). The terms of surrender were accepted by the Jewish side on 28 May.
6. In the Russian text *administrator.* While the UNSCOP proposal of 1 September 1947 spoke about a governor to be appointed by the United Nations for the area of Jerusalem, later UN discussions, particularly before 15 May 1948, preferred to designate the highest administrative position in Jerusalem as commissioner.
7. The UN documents on Palestine during 1947–48 usually refer to Jerusalem as the 'international city', 'City of Jerusalem' or 'Trust Territory'. The form employed in this text may have been constructed on the pattern of the 'Free City of Trieste'.
8. In the UN debate on Palestine in 1947–48 there were many proposals put forward by various sides to send an international police force (1,000 to 10,000 strong) to Jerusalem. On 4 June 1948 the Custos announced a plan to organize a Holy Land militia of international volunteers to protect the holy places (see *Facts on File*, 30 May–5 June 1948, p. 174).
9. Reference is to the privileged status of the Greek Orthodox Church as custodian of the holy places which was granted by Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent after the conquest of Palestine in 1517.
10. For centuries the Christian denominations in the Holy Land quarrelled over the rights to various shrines. Their position was regulated by the Ottoman government in 1757 by the statute known as the Status Quo Statute. It was confirmed in 1852, guaranteed by the European powers in 1878 and reconfirmed by the British in 1929.

138
N.M. Shvernik to Ch. Weizmann (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2385/3
Moscow, 30 June 1948

To the President of the Provisional Council of the Government of Israel, Dr. Chaim Weizmann,

Mr. President,

Desiring to ensure the maintenance and development of friendly relations established between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the State of Israel, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has ordered that Citizen Pavel Ivanovich Ershov be accredited to you as its Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary.

In accrediting Citizen Pavel Ivanovich Ershov by means of this official document, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics requests, Mr. President, that you receive him cordially, and lend credence to all that he respectfully conveys to you in the name of the government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

N. Shvernik
Authenticated:
V. Molotov
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR

139
M. Shertok to A. Eban (New York)

CODED TEL: ISA 93.01/2180/21
Tel Aviv, 7 July 1948

Explain Soviet delegation we interested prolongation truce for consolidation state and army, therefore hope they will not oppose order by Security Council if Arab League refuses.[1]

Shertok

140
M. Shertok to E. Epstein (Washington)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2329/22
Tel Aviv, 22 July 1948

View impending arrival US representative, please convey Soviet legation earliest arrival their minister most desirable.[1] Take opportunity explain we deeply regret delay establishment Israeli legation Moscow owing Golda's accident.[2] Expect her here next week, hope she [be] able leave after brief stay.

Shertok

Doc. 139

1. The cease-fire (sometimes loosely called 'truce') in Palestine took effect on 11 June for the duration of four weeks. It terminated on 9 July. Efforts to renew the cease-fire started before its termination, but these negotiations ran aground, owing mainly to Arab procrastination. On 15 July the Security Council finally decided on a renewed cease-fire, which took effect on 18 July, this time 'until a peaceful adjustment of the situation in Palestine is reached'.

Doc. 140

1. Soviet minister Ershov arrived in Israel on 9 August, preceding American special representative James McDonald, who arrived on 12 August.
2. Golda Meyerson was injured in a road accident in the US. She finally left Israel for Moscow on 19 August.

141
A. Eban to M. Shertok (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 93.01/2180/22
New York, 23 July 1948

First long conversation Malik today, extremely cordial. Evinced appreciation our military successes, discussed effect setbacks on Arab regimes. Approved our application membership[1] but advises careful preparation, believes all depends degree American support. Hoped early beginning Golda [Meyerson]'s mission.[2]

Eban

142
Avetisov and Biiazi to P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.22, LL.10–11
Moscow, 26 July 1948

To the Minister of the USSR in Israel, Comrade Ershov,

In accordance with our agreement with you, we are sending you one copy of each of the following films:

1. *Russkii vopros* (The Russian Question)[1]
2. *Miklukho Maklai*
3. *Tretii udar* (The Third Blow)[2]
4. *Den' pobedivshei strany* (The Day of the Victorious Country)
5. *Aleksandr Matrosov*
6. *Zhizn' v tsitadeli* (Life in the Citadel)

Doc. 141

1. To the United Nations.
2. See Doc. 140.

Doc. 142

1. A propaganda film about political oppression in the US, showing how anti-Soviet feeling was created and promoted by the American imperialists.
2. A so-called 'artistic documentary'; one of four postwar films about Stalin (*The Oath*, 1946; *The Third Blow*, 1948; *The Fall of Berlin*, 1948; *The Battle of Stalingrad*, 1948). Historian Peter Kenez describes these productions as follows: 'In every film Stalin speaks slowly, conveying the weight of his every utterance. He is always calm, he is always working tirelessly, and he can always tell the next move of the enemy. He is surrounded by people whose eyes light up at every new manifestation of his genius' (Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, p. 235).

7. *Kontsert iunykh pionerov* (The Young Pioneers' Concert)
8. *Fizkul'turnyi parad 1947g.*, part 1 (The Gymnastic Parade, 1947)

All these films are to be forwarded to Yitzhak Yair, owner of the film company Yairfilms, who lives in Tel Aviv at No. 8, Rothschild Boulevard, on the following conditions:

1. The film *The Gymnastic Parade (part 1)* should be given to him outright, since he has already paid for it through the Anglo-Palestine Bank. The remaining five parts of the film are already in the possession of Yairfilm.
2. Copies of all the other films should be given to him only upon receipt of an Anglo-Palestine Bank certificate stating that Yairfilm has paid the price of each film to our accounts, registered through Gosbank's Department of Foreign Customers from Moscow.
3. If the firm Yairfilm refuses to buy any of the above films, we can sell them to any other firm which you consider more or less suitable for the conduct of commercial relationships with Soveksportfilm.[3]
4. In view of the special importance of expanding the screening of Soviet films in Israel, and until a Soviet trade mission is set up there, we request that you designate one member of the USSR's legation in Israel to deal with film business, and to whom we could address our inquiries in the future.
5. At the same time, we enclose a copy of our agreement with Yairfilm stating that we should send them twenty films a year.

According to this agreement, the firm is granted the right to screen only those films which it has selected. As for films which it has rejected, Soveksportfilm has the right to sell these to another firm in this country.

In addition, we enclose for your information a list of all the films sold in Palestine up to 1945. The licence periods for the vast majority of these films have long ago expired, and according to the agreement they should be returned to us or, if showing continues, the firm is obliged to pay us the additional fee for the extension of the licence.

However, not a single copy of the films listed has been returned to us, nor have we received any additional licence fees. If a film whose licence has expired appears on Israeli screens, please let us know, so that we may demand payment of the licence fee from the firm.

According to the arrangement so far, we have sent to Israel only films which the firm has agreed to take from us, i.e., films for commercial screening. However, we can now send the Soviet legation any film approved for export, which you may show to the Soviet colony, and then offer or convey to the firm for commercial screening.

Kindly instruct that information about the showing of Soviet films in Israel be sent to us.

---

3. Soviet foreign trade firm for the export of films.

For your information, the Anglo-Palestine Bank in Tel Aviv holds copies of the films *The People's Court* (on the Nuremberg trial) and *Alisher Navoi*, which Yairfilm has rejected, supposedly because the former has been banned by the censor and the latter is unsuitable for Israeli viewers.

We are sending instructions by telegram for these films to be transferred to you.

Once you have viewed these films, we should be grateful if you would give instructions that they be shown on commercial screens.

Acting Director of Soveksportfilm
Biiazi
Director of the Eastern Department
Avetisov

143
Meeting: M. Silin – E. Überall[1]
(Prague, 9 August 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.2, LL.1–2
Secret

On 9 August, Überall, the minister of the State of Israel in Czechoslovakia, who had just presented his credentials to President Gottwald,[2] paid a call on me.

In the course of our conversation, describing the situation in Israel, Überall told me that the military position on the various fronts was favourable for Israel, and that the people's morale was very high. He said that the people were not placing any hope in successful negotiations, but were getting ready for military action in order to bring the war to an end.

Überall stated that Count Bernadotte, the representative of the United Nations, was, in fact, the envoy of the Americans and the British, and was working against Israel's interests. The government of Israel was trying to come to a direct agreement with the Arabs.

There is now some hope of this, since there are differences between Egypt and the British. Moreover there are strong feelings among the Arab population and in some Arab countries in favour of a peace agreement with Israel.

Referring to the difficulties besetting Israel, Überall told me that what they needed most was heavy arms (heavy artillery and tanks). However, there was some hope that they would get a certain amount of these arms this month.

The food supply in Israel was not bad, and they have sufficient food for several months.

Doc. 143

1. Ehud Avriel (Überall), Israel's minister in Czechoslovakia.
2. Klement Gottwald, president of Czechoslovakia from 14 June 1948, succeeding E. Beneš.

The American Jews give constant financial assistance to Israel. However, the American government has recently been obstructing this assistance. The American government itself gives no aid to Israel.

Überall went on to say that every month about 10,000 immigrants of military age arrive in Israel. The intention now is that up to 20,000 immigrants (including family members) will arrive each month. In particular, there has been an agreement with Romania that up to 5,000 Jews a month will leave for Israel.[3]

Überall remarked that, after the Soviet Union, the People's Democracies were giving most assistance to Israel.

Überall told me that in about a fortnight the Israeli minister to Moscow would be going to the Soviet Union through Czechoslovakia. He wanted to know whether he should take with him all necessary equipment for the official premises, or whether this could be obtained on the spot.

In addition, Überall asked whether, since the Israeli minister had not yet arrived in Moscow, he could pass matters of substantial importance to Israel through me to the Soviet Union.

I answered that if he had plenary powers from his government, he could send documents or notes as he wished through us to the Soviet Union.

On the equipment of the official premises of the Israeli legation in Moscow, I answered that such equipment could be brought in with permission from the Soviet government, but that if they so wished and had the necessary funds, they could certainly acquire it on the spot.

At the end of our talk, Überall asked me to pass on to the Soviet government from the government and people of Israel their gratitude for the support which the Soviet Union has given to the State of Israel.

The conversation lasted 50 minutes.

Ambassador of the USSR in Czechoslovakia
M. Silin

3. See *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, No. 374, pp. 399–400.

144
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Shertok
(Tel Aviv, 11 August 1948)

DIARY, AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.3, LL.12–13
Secret

Shertok paid his first call on me. He congratulated me on my arrival, asked about the route followed, and said that the Soviet Union's decision on the partition of Palestine, and then on the recognition of Israel as a sovereign state, was a historic decision of enormous importance both for Palestinian Jews and for those of other countries. There are a large number of Jews from Russia in Palestine, who studied in Russian schools and were brought up on Russian literature. In spite of the persecution and pogroms to which they had been subjected by the tsarist authorities, they largely retained their sympathy for the Russian people. After the October Revolution the Jews of Palestine expected that there would be a radical change in the attitude towards them, but there were no official documents about this, and certain statements in the press, as well as the attitude of various communist parties on this question, showed that there had been no substantial change. This fact distressed the Jews for many years, but they hoped that sooner or later the attitude towards them would become more friendly. Unlike the 1914–18 war, in which the Jews supported the governments of their countries of residence, were divided into two warring camps, and therefore fought against one another, World War II united all Jews of all countries into one camp and brought changes in many countries, including the Soviet Union, in their attitude to the Jews. The Jews' sympathy for the USSR increased, and they understood that they would have the support of the Soviet Union in their aspiration to create a national state. Soviet recognition of Israel justified this hope, and was received with great joy and enthusiasm as an event of enormous historic significance.

After these remarks by Shertok, I handed him a copy of my credentials. He said that it was a great honour for him to be the first Israeli to receive such an important document. He read it attentively, and perhaps even twice through, and then asked who Shvernik was, and after I had explained, asked who was Kalinin. I answered, with an expression of extreme surprise at his ignorance, that Kalinin had died two years ago. Shertok was embarrassed, although he tried to conceal it, and attempted to get his own back by saying that he must point out that the credentials were incorrectly addressed: They should have been addressed not to Weizmann, but to Ben-Gurion who, pending the presidential elections, combined the posts of head of government and head of state, while Weizmann was chairman (president) of the State Council, a body for legislation and ratification, like an ordinary parliament. There is no doubt that, after the constitution is ratified in October, Weizmann will be elected president, unless he himself withdraws from the post because of his health,

which could not be said to be good; but for the present he is only speaker of parliament.[1] Shertok added that the wrong address on the credentials was of no substantial importance, and that he would arrange with Ben-Gurion that these letters should be presented as they were.

Shertok went on to say that the arrival of the USSR legation in Tel Aviv would make possible the establishment of direct relations between the USSR and Israel. 'You must understand', he continued, 'that Israel is a young state, which is only just beginning to be built, and which needs much economic aid from outside.' Immigration would continue, and it was reckoned that the population of Israel would reach 2–3 million in the next few years. To house and accommodate such a mass of people would require enormous resources, which would come from the Jewish communities in the US, Canada, South Africa and Britain. The government of Israel would have to take into account that the members of these communities were citizens of foreign states, but since these states were members of the UN, Israel would be guided by the UN.

When Shertok asked how we had settled in, I said frankly that we had settled in badly, and asked him to provide the legation with a building appropriate to its prestige. Shertok promised help, but said nothing specific.

At the end of the conversation, which lasted 35 minutes, Shertok invited me to come into the garden, and said he would like me to be photographed with him. Then Shertok took me to the office of Eytan, the director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and introduced me to him. My conversation with Eytan lasted 7–8 minutes, and was purely formal.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

1. In a letter to Weizmann on 22 August 1948 Shertok related that 'Preparations are now on foot for holding elections some time in October, and as soon as they are over and the Constituent Assembly meets, I hope it will be possible for it immediately to vote on the Articles of the Constitution bearing on the republican form of government and the presidency by taking these major points out of the context, so that their approval need not wait until the whole Constitution is ready for adoption. The election of the president of the republic can then proceed in whatever form the Constituent Assembly may have decided' (*Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, No. 352, p. 371). On 17 February 1949 Weizmann was elected to the presidency by the Knesset (the official name for the Constituent Assembly as of 14 February 1949).

145
A. Eban to M. Shertok (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2384/2
[New York] 12 August 1948

SUBJECT: NOTE ON CONVERSATION WITH MR. IAKOV MALIK

On 5 August, after a discussion on procedural matters arising from his presidency of the Security Council, Mr. Malik turned to a general discussion of the Near Eastern situation.

He expressed his deep admiration for Israel's military effort. The Soviet view had always been that the Arabs were overrated as a military power, due to what they had regarded as the social weaknesses of the Near East and of the essential disunity amongst the various elements of the Arab League. Nevertheless, they had not expected any such debacle.

Mr. Malik informed me that it was now the unanimous view amongst all delegations that the State of Israel was an irrevocable fact. I asked him if that applied even to those who were behaving as though no State of Israel existed. He repeated his view that all members of the Security Council – and, he believed, even the Arab member,[1] in the secret depths of his heart – were now of the view that the State of Israel had come to stay.

In the ensuing discussion on the nature of Arab society and culture, it became clear to me that the Soviets believed they had made a correct analysis and taken the correct decision, of which they now expected to reap the fruits. He hinted that he assumed our appreciation of the fact that the various forms of assistance which we had received from East European and Balkan countries were in the final analysis, a consequence of Russia's favourable attitude.

His government assumed that an event so drastic as losing the Palestine war could not pass the Arab world by without deep effects. They expected that there would be some questioning of the popular character of the regimes and that we might look forward to a period of increasing upheaval. I analyzed the defects of the Arab social structure by giving a detailed description of Egyptian society with the relevant statistics. This appeared to interest him deeply, and he asked for such material as we had on these subjects to be brought to his attention. He repeatedly expressed the view that the Arab League's military adventure responded in no way to the interests of the Arab people. He further hinted that the British position had been undermined, not merely in Palestine but throughout the Near East, and that this too represented success for the Soviets' Palestine policy.

We discussed the social, economic and cultural future of Israel. He was anxious to know details of industrial prospects, and expressed the opinion that

1. Syria was a non-permanent member of the Security Council. Reference is to Faris al-Khuri.

the economic and social effects of Israel's development would have a profound influence on the Middle East as a whole. He agreed with me that it was this prospect which explained much of the opposition to Israel's development. He indicated that he would like more precise knowledge concerning our industrial and social program for the next few years.

Conclusion: It is clear that while the USSR has a great deal of subjective sympathy for our cause, its attitude rests on the still more stable foundation of enlightened self-interest. They regard their decision to support Jewish statehood as having triumphantly justified itself in terms of the essential objectives which they pursue in the Near East. Those objectives do not include any hope that Israel will become a satellite of the Eastern bloc. No resentment is ever expressed in these conversations against our obvious interest in improving our relations with the Western powers. The Soviets, however, are aware that their attitude deserves and probably wins sympathy for them in Israel as well as among certain sections of American public opinion.[2] It also strengthens their moral position in the United Nations. These gains for them are entirely compatible with our own independence. It is the basic fact of Jewish statehood rather than the orientation of the state which conforms with their objectives at this time.

146
Hapoel Sports Association[1] to G. Meyerson (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2500/2A
Tel Aviv, 12 August 1948

We congratulate you on your appointment to the important and responsible post of representing our country in the Soviet Union. However, we would also like to draw your attention to various matters upon which we shall elaborate in this letter:

Physical education in the Soviet Union is a phenomenon with which we wish to become acquainted.

From a country which paid no attention to physical training, the Soviet Union has become, according to reports in our possession, a formidable power within a few short years.

Physical education there has become an extremely useful element to raise the work and defensive capabilities of the masses.

Doc. 145

2. This was especially important for Moscow, as the US presidential elections approached, in particular because it was thought that candidate Henry Wallace might hold the balance between the Democrats and Republicans. Wallace had been dismissed from the Truman administration in 1946 for criticizing its anti-Soviet policy.

Doc. 146

1. Sports association affiliated with the Jewish Federation of Labour – the Histadrut.

Concurrently with mass physical training, competitive sport there has reached a very high level, and Soviet athletes can easily compete with athletes of all countries in most branches of sport.

For these reasons we are interested in getting to know, first hand, the organization, structure, and working methods that are in effect there, not least because the social aspects of activity in this sphere are [also] of particular interest to us.

There are two additional reasons for our interest:

Many regions of the Soviet Union have a climate similar to the conditions under which we work. Finally, sport constitutes one of the best means to forge friendly relations, it attracts attention and has a mass appeal.

For these reasons we attach importance to:

(a) Organizing mutual visits in the various branches of sport for Soviet athletes and our athletes. To begin with, we should consider football games by Soviet teams here (not necessarily from major cities, but from the Black Sea coast and the Caucasus). After that we should consider visits by our teams there.

(b) the possibility of study at schools for trainers and physical education teachers, at both the intermediate and higher levels.

(c) Every June a *Physical Culture Day* is held in Moscow to which representatives of foreign countries are also invited. We would like our representatives to be invited to these festivities, and it is desirable that they should be there some time before the actual day so that they can study the general problems of Soviet sport and establish contacts.

(d) Next spring the European Basketball Championship of the World Basketball Federation – of which we are members (its headquarters are in Switzerland) – will be held in Moscow. We would like to take part in that tournament.

(e) As you know, this September a team of the Israel Defence Forces, under the auspices of the Israel Football Association, will visit the United States. We think it would be worthwhile to arrange a similar visit to the Soviet Union: football is extraordinarily popular there, and in the southern regions of the Soviet Union they also play during the winter months. We note in this connection the visit by a Spanish team to the Soviet Union during the Spanish Civil War and the great interest it aroused throughout the country.

We are ready to provide you with any additional information.

With best wishes for full success in your mission, and hoping you will also devote time to the questions we have raised in this letter.

With comradely regards,

Emmanuel Gil

147
Meeting: M.L. Mukhin – S. Tsirulnikov (Tel Aviv, 13 August 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.4, LL.30–4
Secret

Today I received in our legation Solomon Vulfovich Tsirulnikov, a citizen of Israel. Tsirulnikov said that he would like to see the minister since his previous meetings with Soviet personnel who had come to Israel gave him some reason to hope that he could play a useful role also at present.

Tsirulnikov told me that he had met Mikhailov, Petrenko and others, and had been particularly friendly with Mikhailov, to whom he had passed on such information and material as he needed.[1]

'I suppose', he said, 'that as someone new to the place, you may be interested in getting to know about certain features of local life.'

Tsirulnikov went on to say:

> At present, Israel's entire political and social life, leaving aside military activity, is a kaleidoscope of disagreements, passions and struggles among various political parties, trends and politicians, reflecting both the course of history and the contemporary international situation.
>
> The basic political force today is the 'Mapai' party – the Palestine Workers' Party, which is most strongly represented in the State Council and government. All its leaders, particularly Ben-Gurion, Shertok, Remez and others, hold the most important offices of state. This party also occupies the dominant position in the trade unions. The newspaper *Davar*, though formally the organ of the Histadrut, in fact serves as the organ of the party.
>
> Mapai's influence is about 60 per cent in the workers' movement and 40 per cent in the political life of the country.
>
> The second party in this respect is Mapam, the United Workers' Party, which has two ministers in the government: of social affairs and agriculture. It also has a good deal of influence in the army since it includes a substantial part of the country's kibbutzim (agricultural communes), which are a most important manpower reserve not only for the regular ranks, but also for the army's officer corps. This party was created by merging Ahdut Haavoda (United Labour) with Poale Zion (The Workers of Zion) and Hashomer Hatsair (The Young Guard). The leaders of the party are Tabenkin, Yaari, Hider, and Sneh (Kleinbaum). The Communist Party is extremely small, and has no significant influence.
>
> The provisional government of Israel, in its current make-up, has not in fact given up its pro-British attitude, and in view of today's circumstances, is willing to cooperate in many ways with the US. The anti-British statements by some of the leaders of Mapai who are in the government in no way reflect the real thoughts of the speakers and are nothing but an attempt to raise their prestige in the eyes of the British, to show that they are worth taking notice of and that they

1. For Mikhailov and Petrenko's visit to Palestine, see Docs. 15, 16.

could be of interest to them. In fact, the present government's leaders have done nothing to find the right way forward for the development of the young state at a time when the world is divided into two camps.

Links with the Soviet Union are merely the technical formalization of great events which took place without their participation, for instance, the creation of the State of Israel. They do only what has to be done. These leaders came to power at a moment of camouflage, on the crest of the wave of international events. Their real attitude to the Soviet Union is not merely neutral, but hostile. This is proved by Ben-Gurion's coarse and insulting phrase about I. V. Stalin, which he uttered among his supporters, but which later became more widely known.

When questioned in the State Council about the motives for the appointment of Golda Meyerson as minister to the USSR, Shertok answered that Meyerson's strength lay in the fact that she was not one to be ruled by emotion or swayed by someone else's policy. Of course her pro-American views are well known.

As for Weizmann, he is at present being kept in the background, for he is too much entangled with the British, which can at present damage not only his personal authority, but Israeli policy in general.

Our leadership's intention to enter into direct negotiations with the Arabs is no more than a desire to find a common language with the highest Arab circles, which are directly dependent on their Anglo-American bosses.

I have now withdrawn from active political life, and only occasionally receive information from friends, but I understand the 'neutral position' of our government. It has to take account of the facts, but at the same time it is looking for ways to solve the problem. So what comes next? The answer to this question is that according to certain information, our representatives in the Jewish Agency [Executive] are conducting some sort of secret negotiations in London.

Unfortunately, even the war with the Arabs was, for the most part, not a liberation movement but nationalist butchery, which brought with it totally unnecessary repressions and looting of the Arab population. So, in this case, too, there were no coordinated actions which would have been necessary and useful to raise the prestige of Israeli policy. Such were the first days of the confused and complicated life of our state.

Speaking about himself, Tsirulnikov said that he had lived in Odessa till 1928. His father had been a prominent miller, and because of his social position both he and his children had been deprived of their political rights. Tsirulnikov was a leader of some underground Zionist youth organizations, and supported the Menshevik program. As a result of his activity he was repressed and spent a long time in prison in various towns of the USSR. In 1928, supposedly in response to petitions from a number of Palestinian Jewish organizations, he was allowed to emigrate to Palestine. At present he is a partner in a soap factory, which gives him an independent economic status. He sees his political independence as a result of thorough theoretical training ('unlike the country's present leaders'), and professes a complete commitment to Marxist ideology, which has enabled him to shed the burden of past mistakes. He is not a member of any party, so he has been able to speak out freely and

independently in complex circumstances and to work to the advantage of the Soviet Union. Most recently he has been occupied mainly with his own personal affairs and intends to write a book criticizing his previous views.

Tsirulnikov gives the impression of being a fairly mature and well-informed person.

His attitude to us is evidently determined by wounded vanity and by his position as an unrecognized leader in the political struggle here, who might in certain conditions be glad of our support.

V. Rozhkov, first secretary at the legation, was present during the conversation.

Counsellor of the USSR Legation in Israel
M. Mukhin

148
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – G. Meyerson (Tel Aviv, 14 August 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.3, LL.39–40
Secret

Meyerson paid me her first call accompanied by Levavi, the director of the East European Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who has been appointed first secretary of the Israeli legation in the USSR. After mutual greetings, Meyerson said that she expects to travel to Moscow *via* Prague on 26–27 August, though the final date of her departure is not yet fixed.

Touching on cultural life in Moscow, Meyerson remarked on the high level of culture in the USSR. I said that she would have the opportunity to confirm this by visiting a number of theatres in Moscow. She agreed, and added that some Hebrew theatres were at present on tour in the US.[1] Meyerson said that she was sorry that she did not know Russian, but would study it with the assistance of such colleagues as Levavi, who knew it well. She said that Hebrew was more foreign to her than Russian, since she had lived for many years in the US.

Meyerson then turned to housing problems in Tel Aviv, which were caused by the arrival of large numbers of people from Jerusalem, as well as immigrants. She said that the question of immigration was the most important of all for the State of Israel. As for Truman's declaration about the admission of 100,000 immigrants, Meyerson called it an unrealistic scrap of paper. The number of Jews in Palestine was now about 800,000, compared with 60–70,000 when she arrived in 1921. A few days ago she held a conversation with the

1. The leading Tel Aviv theatre company Habima (founded in Moscow in 1917), was touring the US in summer 1948.

American consul in Jerusalem, who said that, in his view, the Jews could continue immigration for another two years, but would then have to discuss the matter with the Arabs. She commented that she had not answered the American on this point, but wondered whether in two years' time the US would agree to discuss the question of immigration into the US with Mexico and other [Latin] American countries.[2] Meyerson emphasized that at present many Jews want to come to Israel. Israeli industry and agriculture are absorbing the entire flow of immigrants. In July this year 20,000 entered the country and they all found work.

Taking the opportunity, I asked Levavi to give me Ben-Gurion's correct title, since I have been told that until I present my credentials on Tuesday 17 August, I am to address him as prime minister and head of government, which are one and the same, and do not reflect his role as head of state.[3] Levavi promised to consult Ben-Gurion's office, and to telephone me with the result.

The conversation lasted 45 minutes. The attaché, Popov, was present.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

149
M.P. Fedorin to V.A. Zorin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.4, LL.54–5
Tel Aviv, 14 August 1948
Secret

On 14 August 1948, as instructed by the minister, Comrade P.I. Ershov, I was present, as representative of the Soviet legation in Israel and of VOKS, at a meeting organized by the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR to celebrate the arrival of our legation in Israel.

The meeting was held in the auditorium of the Esther cinema, one of the largest in Tel Aviv. There were about 1,800 people present in the cinema, with about a thousand more on the street. The proceedings were broadcast by radio from inside and outside the building. The hall was decorated with the flags of the Soviet Union and Israel. A large portrait of Comrade Stalin hung above the table on the platform, and below it, in Russian and Hebrew, the slogan 'Long Live Friendship between the State of Israel and the USSR'. At the entrance there was another slogan: 'Welcome, Soviet representative to the State of Israel'.

---

2. In the record of the conversation transmitted to Washington, the American consul-general in Jerusalem did not give his own opinion. He included the following statement by Golda Meyerson on the subject: 'Unrestricted and complete control of immigration will be demanded by Israel as its right as a sovereign state' (see *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. V, p. 1307).
3. Cf. Doc. 144.

When I appeared in the hall with Tarnopoler, the secretary-general of the league, those present stood up and greeted us with lengthy applause. The following people were on the platform: Tarnopoler, secretary-general of the league; Mikunis, from the Israeli Communist Party;[1] Harari, from the so-called Hebrew Communist Party;[2] Dr. Sneh, Ilanit, and Zerubavel from Mapam; and Friedman and others from Mapai.

Seven people delivered speeches of welcome: Tarnopoler, Dr. Sneh, Mikunis, Friedman, Harari, Ilanit and Shohat (Mapam).

All the speeches expressed the Jewish people's gratitude to the Soviet Union for its help and decisive role in the formation of the State of Israel, and its progressive role in the life of all humanity. For instance, Dr. Sneh said in his speech:

> I will allow myself to say frankly to our guest, the representative of the Soviet Union, that our people love the Soviet Union, and trust the Soviet Union, which has supported us and has never let us down. For our part, we swear that we shall never let the Soviet Union down, and shall devote all our energies to strengthening the friendship and unbreakable alliance with our great friend and the defender of mankind – the Soviet Union.

Mikunis delivered a striking speech, calling on everyone to struggle against Anglo-American imperialism, for the complete independence of the State of Israel, for strengthening friendship with the Soviet Union, and so forth. His speech was frequently interrupted by prolonged applause and cries of 'hurrah'. All the speeches were interrupted by loud applause at the mention of the Soviet Union, Soviet representatives at the UN (Comrades Gromyko, Manuil'skii, Tsarapkin), the first Soviet minister to Israel, etc. After the exchange of greetings, a youth workers' choir sang the Jewish anthem, the Soviet national anthem and the Internationale, in which almost everyone in the hall took part. After this, the choir sang several Soviet songs ('The Gunners' March', the song about Budennyi,[3] etc.) and Jewish songs.

Second Secretary of the USSR Legation in Israel
M. Fedorin

---

1. The Israeli Communist Party came into being in October 1948 with the reunification of the Arab and Jewish communists who had split in 1943 (see Ro'i, *Soviet Decision Making in Practice,* pp. 103–4).
2. The Hebrew Communists had organized in October 1947 and eventually dispersed in August 1949, their members joining Mapam.
3. Semen Budennyi, Red Cavalry commander in the Russian Civil War 1918–20 and later marshal of the Red Army; a popular mythical figure in Soviet official culture.

150
Meeting: P. I. Ershov– D. Ben-Gurion
(Tel Aviv, 17 August 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.3, LL.14–15
Tel Aviv, 17 August 1948
Secret

On 17 August I presented my credentials to Ben-Gurion, prime minister and head of the provisional government of the State of Israel. (This is his official title, although it does not reflect Ben-Gurion's role as head of state.) At 10:45 government cars arrived at the Gat Rimmon hotel. On the first of them, which belongs to Ben-Gurion personally, the state flag of the USSR was flying. At the hotel we were warmly greeted by a large crowd. Although we rode through the town by the shortest route, and did not go along the main streets, there were groups of people at almost every intersection who greeted us with applause and cheers. At the prime minister's house, there was a guard of honour of forty soldiers and a band, which played the Soviet state anthem and Hatikva.

Before presenting my credentials, I said: 'Mr. Prime Minister and head of the provisional government of the State of Israel, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has appointed me as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Soviet Union. Allow me to present my credentials, which accredit me to you in this capacity. When he had taken the credentials, Ben-Gurion said in Hebrew: 'In the name of the government of Israel and the people of Israel, I warmly wish you success. I hope that your legation will serve the good of both our countries and of the entire world.' Shertok then introduced me to the people who were present at the ceremony, and I presented the diplomatic staff of the legation to Ben-Gurion.

In the brief conversation which followed this ceremony, Ben-Gurion said that the people of Israel were obliged to the Soviet Union for its moral support at the UN. The State of Israel has already grown stronger, its people and especially the young generation know that they are fighting for their own state and their own idea – and it must be said that they know how to fight, as was proved in the period between the first and second cease-fire agreements.[1] The army has received a substantial amount of arms from Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, including artillery, of which they had none at all when the war began. However, the continuing period of 'neither peace nor war' does not allow Israel to give serious attention to its domestic affairs, particularly the

1. During the period between the first and second cease-fires, i.e., from 9 through 18 July 1948. Israeli forces established control of extensive territory, especially in the Lower Galilee, including Nazareth, and in the central region, dislodging the Arab Legion from Lydda and Ramle.

question of immigration, which is vital to it. In conclusion, he wished me success in working for the good of both our countries.

The presentation ceremony was attended by Minister of Foreign Affairs Shertok, Israel's minister to the USSR Meyerson, director-general of the Foreign Ministry Eytan, the prime minister's secretary Sherf, political counsellors at the Foreign Ministry Kohn and Shiloah, secretary-general of the Foreign Ministry Berman, director of the Legal Division Rosenne, director of the East European Division Levavi, director of the Protocol Division Simon, and others.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

151
A.A. Gromyko to V.M. Molotov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.022, OP.1, P.1, D.11, L.3.
Moscow, 26 August 1948
Secret

New version of item 18 (i) of the draft directive to the Soviet delegation to the General Assembly[1] (on the question of Palestine).

(i) The following proposal is to be made:

'The General Assembly recognizes the need for all foreign troops and foreign military personnel to be withdrawn immediately from the territories of the Jewish and Arab states in Palestine, the creation of which was envisaged by the General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947, and asks the Security Council to take the necessary steps to prevent the renewal of military activity in Palestine.'

A. Gromyko[2]

1. Reference is to the Third Regular Session of the UN General Assembly convened in Paris on 21 September 1948.
2. Copies to Molotov, Vyshinskii, Gusev, Zorin and the Department of UN Affairs.

152
D. Ben-Gurion to N.M. Shvernik (Moscow)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2385/3
Tel Aviv, 26 August 1948

Provisional Government of Israel
Letter of Accreditation

To
The Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet
of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Mr. Nikolai Mikhailovich Shvernik

Mr. Chairman,

Esteeming the relations of friendship and mutual understanding that have been created between the Soviet Union and the State of Israel, and wishing to strengthen and develop those relations of friendship, the provisional government of Israel has decided to appoint to Your Excellency Mrs. Golda Meyerson as Minister Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

Mrs. Meyerson's character and qualities lead us to believe that she will fulfil the lofty mission entrusted to her in a manner that will gain Your Excellency's full confidence and cause us satisfaction.

We entreat you, Mr. Chairman, to accept our minister with good will and to place your confidence in all the messages which she will have the honour to transmit to Your Excellency and to the government of the Soviet Union on behalf of the Government of Israel.

The Provisional Government of Israel expresses to Your Excellency its respect and conveys its sincerest greetings and its wishes for your well-being and for the well-being and prosperity of your country.

Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of Israel

Signature appended:

Foreign Minister

Signed at the Government Compound, Israel
21st day of Menahem-Av 5708, 26 August 1948
Entered in the First Protocol Register as Number 1

153
Meeting: M.P. Fedorin – L. Tarnopoler
(Tel Aviv, 31 August 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.4, LL.21–3
Secret

Tarnopoler came to tell me about the meeting of the Central Committee of the League [for Friendly Relations with the USSR], which was held on 30 August 1948 to confirm the league's work plan. He said that the Central Committee had confirmed the work plan as submitted, which was as follows:

I. In five or six weeks a congress of the league will be convened, at which a number of issues will be raised: 1. adoption of the constitution and program of the league; 2. publication of the league's newspaper; 3. organizational matters – re-election of the Central Committee of the league, etc.

To prepare all these matters and the agenda for the congress and also to carry on all the current business of the league until the congress, the Central Committee elected a special preparatory commission, known as the provisional secretariat, consisting of five persons: 1. Tarnopoler as secretary-general, from the Mapam Party; 2. Wilner, from the Communist Party of Israel (member of the Communist Party's Central Committee); 3. Dr. Reznik, from the Mapai Party; 4. Bialer, representing the so-called Hebrew Communist Party (a splinter group from the Communist Party of Israel);[1] 5. Dr. Kramer, from the Zionist Workers' Party (the left wing of the General Zionist party).[2]

Tarnopoler told me that the provisional secretariat would first and foremost proceed to a mass recruitment drive for membership in the league, so that by the date of the congress it would have not less than ten thousand members. Appeals would also be made for old members to renew their membership. In some towns and settlements there would be meetings and rallies in honour of the Soviet legation to Israel, which would serve to launch the process of renewal and recruitment to League membership.

II. Preparations for the celebration of 7 November. The Central Committee would organize an exhibition about the Soviet Union. Tarnopoler said that the implementation of this project would depend chiefly on help from the VOKS representative in finding the necessary material for the exhibition.

I said that I welcomed this project and hoped that we would be able to find the material needed for the exhibition. (Note: The legation has brought with it from Moscow three VOKS exhibitions: 'Upbringing and Education'; 'Soviet Sportsmen'; 'The Military Skill of the Soviet Army', and some other materials). In addition, the Central Committee decided that on 7 November there would

1. See Doc. 149, n. 1.
2. The General Zionists in Israel encompassed the Progressive Party, which had its own labour wing, Haoved Hatsioni (The Zionist Worker). Apparently, this is the group referred to.

be a 'ceremonial' planting of a forest 'in honour of the Soviet army'. Tarnopoler expressed the Central Committee's wish that the Soviet legation be represented at the planting.

III. The third decision of the Central Committee was to publish a special collection of articles about the Soviet Union's activity at the UN on the Palestine question. This would include all the speeches by Soviet representatives at the UN on the subject and some survey articles from the Soviet press. The editor of the volume has been chosen, and Tarnopoler said that he would like to meet me to ask for our help in choosing material, since they want to take them from Soviet sources (*Pravda, Izvestiia*). I answered by agreeing to meet the editor, and said that I might be able to help him in the selection of material.[3]

IV. The Central Committee has charged the provisional secretariat with organizing a Chair of Russian Language and Literature at the Hebrew University, which is an independent institution, not subordinated to any ministry. If conditions are such as to prevent them from organizing the chair in Jerusalem, then a university department could be created in Tel Aviv. But the solution to this problem, declared Tarnopoler, rests mainly with VOKS, since they want the lectures in this department to be given by a professor from the Soviet Union, who would be officially invited by the university, which would of course pay his whole salary and expenses. They cannot find anyone here with a Soviet education who could give lectures from the point of view they want, that is who would give the real history of the development of classical and contemporary Soviet literature.

Tarnopoler went on to say that eighteen months ago, he had reached an official agreement with the president of the university, Professor Magnes, who had readily agreed to establish a chair of Russian Language and Literature at the university. The budget for the chair was then set at £1,500–2,000 per annum. However, the British authorities' opposition to this project and the total impossibility of agreement on the arrival of a professor from the Soviet Union thwarted the proposal.

I asked Tarnopoler what Professor Magnes thought about the idea now. He said that they had not yet discussed it with him since he was in America, but he would be back in Israel soon. But they were sure that his positive attitude would not have changed. In any case, Tarnopoler went on, he could go at once to Jerusalem and reach an agreement with the vice-president, or with Professor Magnes on his return. Tarnopoler repeated that the implementation of this idea depended chiefly on whether VOKS could supply the necessary professor.

I said I would like to know in more detail about this interesting proposal, and in particular the current opinion of the university authorities. I said I would like to meet them, so that I could report to the minister.

---

3. The book was eventually published in 1950 under the title *Brit Hamoatsot utekumat Yisrael.*

Tarnopoler went on to say that the last point in the work plan was the Central Committee's decision to renew links with the Jewish Leagues for Friendly Relations with the USSR abroad: in Mexico, America, South Africa and other countries.

The conversation lasted 40 minutes.

Second Secretary of the Legation of the USSR in Israel
M. Fedorin

154
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Shertok (Tel Aviv, 2 September 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.3, LL.10–11
Secret

I called on Shertok at his invitation.[1] The meeting was scheduled for 1 September, but because of the mourning,[2] I suggested postponing it to 3 September. Shertok said he was going to Jerusalem on that day and asked me to come on 2 September. To begin with, he said a few words about Comrade Zhdanov's death and noted his contribution to the defence of Leningrad. He did not say anything by way of condolence. I emphasized that Zhdanov was one of the greatest political figures of the Soviet state, and that his death was a serious loss for the whole Soviet Union.

Shertok said that he had invited me to see him in order to tell me about the talks with representatives of the mediator on the question of immigration.[3] This question, he went on, is vital to Israel from every point of view, political, strategic and military. The Israeli government had obeyed the Security Council's resolution of 29 May,[4] although it was disadvantageous to Israel since it obliged the government to single out immigrants of draft age on arrival. Everyone in this category was put into camps, but this decision infringed upon

1. On 27 August, Shmuel Friedman, the new director of the East European Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel, visited Ershov and conveyed Shertok's invitation to apprise the Soviet minister of his negotiations with UN Mediator Count Bernadotte's staff (see AVP RF, f.089, op.1, p.1, d.3, l.34).
2. Soviet institutions around the world were mourning Andrei Zhdanov who died on 31 August 1948. Zhdanov, a member of the Politburo of the AUCP(b) and secretary of its Central Committee, directed the ideological purge of the arts and sciences during the 1940s (see Doc. 70 and n. 3 there).
3. Shertok apparently reported on his conversation with Paul Mohn and John Reedman, chief assistants to Bernadotte, which took place in Tel Aviv on 26 August 1948. On 23 August, Mohn told the Israelis that he had been empowered by Bernadotte to fix the deadline, after which further entry of men of military age (among the immigrants) would be prohibited. Mohn fixed the deadline for 2 September 1948 (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, p. 551).
4. The resolution of 29 May 1948 read *inter alia* as follows: '[The Security Council] calls upon all governments and authorities concerned, should men of military age be introduced into countries or territories under their control, to undertake not to mobilize or submit them to military training during the cease-fire' (see ibid., p. 667).

Israeli sovereignty and violated humanitarian principles. People who had been in concentration camps or ghettos in Germany during the war, and after the war in the concentration camps [*sic*] of West Germany, Italy and other countries, had in this way spent 8–10 years or even longer as prisoners, and would now have to go back into camps on their arrival in Israel. The government of Israel regarded this situation as abnormal and for this reason opened negotiations with the mediator. With his consent it was closing down these camps, having undertaken not to call up persons of conscription age, and having established a register, which would enable the mediator to enquire at any time where any immigrant who had arrived during the cease-fire was to be found. *Entre nous*, Shertok went on, this arrangement made it possible to put the immigrants to work, and thus free a number of people from industry and agriculture for army service. Nevertheless, there had been signs that the mediator was dissatisfied with this registration system for persons elligible for conscription, and his representatives had tried to interpret the Security Council resolution of 29 May to mean that it forbade the entry of immigrants of conscription age. The government of Israel rejected this interpretation and declared that the Security Council's resolution did not justify such a prohibition, and that the mediator's representatives were interpreting it in an arbitrary fashion. Then the latter (Lundström[5] and Mohn) pointed out that nowhere in the Security Council's resolution was it stated that the State of Israel should be allowed to promote unlimited immigration of persons of conscription age. To this they had replied that the resolution did not prohibit the immigration of persons in this category either. At first, the mediator's representatives were ready to make a row about this, and to bring it before the Security Council, but later, apparently, they decided that the Security Council might not support them, that is, it might not decide to prohibit the immigration of persons elligible for conscription. This would damage the representatives' authority, and so they made concessions. They proposed that the government of Israel itself should ask the Security Council to clarify its resolution in the sense of allowing unlimited immigration of persons eligible for conscription; the government, however, rejected this proposal, on the grounds that there was no need of it, since immigration was not forbidden. At that point the negotiations were broken off.[6] The mediator's representatives said that they would wait for the arrival of Bernadotte.[7]

Shertok went on to say that the government of Israel had come into conflict with the US about the immigrants, and had sent them a note because they had forbidden immigration from the American zone of occupation in

5. Apparently an error on Shertok's part. He actually met with Reedman and Mohn. Major-General Aage Lundström, Bernadotte's chief of staff, was in Haifa on that day (ibid., p. 552).
6. In a letter to Reedman, dated 30 August 1948, Shertok noted: 'As I have already explained, the provisional government feels unable to modify its immigration program on account of the truce, as it holds that the resolutions of the Security Council impose no numerical limitation on any age group among the immigrants' (ibid., No. 486, p. 560).
7. At the end of August, Bernadotte was in Sweden; he was due to return to the Middle East in September.

Germany.[8] They simply could not understand this decision by the United States government, and they hoped that it would rectify its mistake. Speaking further on the United States' attitude to Israel, Shertok remarked that Israel's official request for a loan had been met with an official refusal by the State Department. If President Truman were to reconsider this decision by the State Department, then, perhaps, a loan would be granted, but it was hard to say anything definite on this score. The same held for the United States' *de jure* recognition of Israel, but Shertok hopes that the decision on recognition will be taken at the September session of the General Assembly in Paris.

In conclusion, Shertok said that he had decided to inform me about this at a moment when the negotiations with the mediator's representatives threatened to lead to conflict with them; the danger of such conflict now seemed to have subsided, but it could well recur after Bernadotte's return from Sweden. He added that he had nevertheless decided to tell me all this, hinting that he would like me to pass it on to the Soviet government.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

155
G. Meyerson to M. Shertok (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 6 September 1948

Received by chief of protocol and his aide, who escorted us to [Hotel] Metropol. TASS reported in *Izvestiia* and *Pravda* the arrival of Golda and personnel. Namir and Levavi visited Deputy Chief of Protocol Bushuev. Received permission to cable in any form. Price of dollar for diplomats is 8 rubles as against 5.30 [for others]. Legations here fly flag only on holidays. Golda asked to be received by Molotov.[1] At accreditation ceremony there is no custom of flags and anthems. Among condolences of diplomats from both blocs over death of Zhdanov published in press, Golda's included. Jews in few meetings expressed happiness at our arrival. Attitude of authorities and all who meet us friendly. Shalom.

Golda

Doc. 154
8. As a matter of fact, Israel did not send any note on this subject (see ibid., No. 470, p. 539).

Doc. 155
1. See Docs. 156, 157.

156
Meeting: V.M. Molotov – G. Meyerson (Moscow, 7 September 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.1
Secret

RECEPTION OF THE MINISTER OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL, G. MEYERSON
September 1948, 17.00 hrs

Molotov asks whether Meyerson had a good journey.[1]

Meyerson answers: 'Very good'.

Meyerson conveys to Molotov greetings from the head of government of the State of Israel, Ben-Gurion and from the Minister of Foreign Affairs Shertok.

Molotov thanks Meyerson for the greetings.

Meyerson hands Molotov a copy of the credentials and says that her government had instructed her to take the first opportunity to thank Molotov on behalf of the people and government of the State of Israel for the help given to them by the Soviet Union at the United Nations.

Molotov replies that the Soviet government considered this to be their duty, the more so since it was entirely in accord with the Soviet Union's policy towards other peoples.

Meyerson expresses satisfaction that this policy serves the interests both of the Soviet Union and of the State of Israel.

Molotov says that this policy is an expression of the will of the Soviet government and of the multinational Soviet people.

Meyerson says that the State of Israel is unfortunately still experiencing considerable difficulties and therefore needs help from other countries.

Molotov says that the State of Israel is a young state, and in order to grow strong, it will need to overcome considerable difficulties.

Meyerson says that the State of Israel is indeed a young state, born in the heat of war.

Molotov says that the State of Israel faces many serious problems. But he, Molotov, thinks that the state has good prospects. There is no power which could now seriously maintain that it will not accept the existence of the State of Israel because its existence is a fact.

Meyerson agrees with this and says that although the government of the State of Israel relied on its friends, it also relied on its own strength. This is what made the creation of the state possible, in spite of powerful opposition. At present the position of the state is also favourable from the military point of view.

---

1. Golda Meyerson arrived in Moscow on 2 September 1948.

Molotov comments that, in his opinion, the situation of the State of Israel will improve.

Meyerson thanks Molotov for these words, and adds that she forgot to convey to Molotov greetings from Ershov, whom she saw several times before leaving for the Soviet Union.

Molotov thanks her for the greetings and expresses the hope that Ershov is enjoying himself in Israel.

Meyerson answers that the Israeli authorities are doing all they can to ensure that Ershov and the other members of the Soviet legation feel at home. Ershov had had some difficulty in finding premises for the legation, but this problem was now solved or would be solved very shortly.

Molotov asks Meyerson to inform him on the state of affairs in Israel, and in particular, about the immediate prospects for relations with neighbouring countries.

Meyerson answers that the most damaging problem for the State of Israel at present is the cease-fire. The problem is that this armistice has nothing to do with peace. The armistice is just one phase of the war. The government of the State of Israel fears that some states may have an interest in considerably prolonging the cease-fire. This would mean that aggressive foreign troops would remain on Palestinian territory in close proximity to the frontiers of the State of Israel. This compels the State of Israel to keep a large number of people under arms and to be constantly prepared for the renewal of military activity. The government and people of the State of Israel would prefer to get back to peaceful work in the fields and factories and also to tackle the question of increasing the scale of immigration.

Not long ago the State of Israel told the Arab countries that it was ready to meet their representatives at a peace conference. However, it had no illusions about this and knew that the governments of the Arab states would not dare to give a positive response. Now, to judge by certain signs, the peoples of the Arab states are beginning to understand that they have lost the war. In the past the governments of these countries, feeling the instability of their own position, directed their peoples towards war; but now they have to look for a scapegoat. For instance, it is well known that there is substantial friction between the Kingdom of Jordan and the Kingdom of Egypt.[2]

There have already been some unofficial negotiations between representatives of Israel and unofficial representatives of Arab states.[3] But the Arab representatives cannot find the courage to publish any sort of official statement about this. Frankly speaking, the war could be ended quickly if the Arabs were convinced that they would get no more aid from other countries.

Molotov remarks that that is probably true.

---

2. Israeli observers noted growing Egyptian–Transjordanian friction in July 1948, especially on account of the Egyptians' support of the mufti's ambitions in Palestine (see Shimoni to Eban, 9 July 1948, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, No. 306, p. 310).
3. For unofficial contacts between Israel and Transjordan in August 1948, see ibid., No. 416, p. 453; No. 428, p. 490.

Meyerson says that the Arab countries which have received the most assistance from one particular foreign power now blame that power for their failure to achieve their aim.

Molotov remarks that some mention of this has already found its way into the press.

Meyerson expresses her confidence that if the State of Israel were left alone with the Arab world, it would in the end, and perhaps even quite quickly, be able to establish friendly relations with the Arab countries.

Molotov asks whether the Bernadotte Plan[4] has any prospect of success.

Meyerson answers negatively. She says that no one in the State of Israel takes the plan seriously. Bernadotte has shown himself from the very beginning to be incapable of being a mediator in this matter. Either he does not understand the questions facing him, or he is incapable of acting as mediator for some other reason. The worst feature of Bernadotte's activity is that he interprets his brief as if the resolution of 29 November did not exist, and as if he had to begin work in Palestine from the very beginning. The people of the State of Israel and Jews all over the world are indignant about Bernadotte's recommendations on Jerusalem and about his proposal to set up international regimes both in the port of Haifa and the area of the oil-refineries.[5]

Meyerson says that, as a result of the war, the government of the State of Israel has come to the conclusion that it will probably have to raise the matter of frontiers in order to be able to defend them better than those frontiers envisaged in the resolution of 29 November.[6]

Molotov answers that the government of the State of Israel will have to think about this question. But he, Molotov, believes that the State of Israel has made a good start: the basis for creating a strong state has been laid.

Meyerson answers that she is glad to hear it.

Molotov says that obviously there will be a lot of international discussion about the creation of the State of Israel, and that the Israeli government has a great deal of work to do.

Meyerson answers that her government is not frightened of difficulties since it has faced very complex tasks from the very beginning.

---

4. Reference is to the early suggestions submitted by the mediator to the parties on 28 June 1948 'as a possible basis for discussion'. These suggestions called for the establishment of Palestine in its 1922 boundaries (i.e., before the exclusion of Transjordan) as a unitary entity, divided between the Arabs and the Jews into two member-states united by a union whose tasks were to coordinate economic, development and defence matters (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, No. 239, pp. 233–4).
5. The relevant points of Bernadotte's recommendations read: '3. Inclusion of the City of Jerusalem in Arab territory, with municipal autonomy for the Jewish community and special arrangements for the protection of the holy places ... 5. Establishment of a free port at Haifa, the area of the free port to include the refineries and terminals. 6. Establishment of a free airport at Lydda' (*Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, No. 239, p. 234).
6. Meyerson discussed the border issue with Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Zorin on 14 September 1948 (see AVP RF, f.021, op.21, p.1, d.4, l.159).

Molotov agrees that there have been considerable difficulties. He expresses the hope that Meyerson will work successfully in Moscow and says that he is willing to help her in her work.

Meyerson says that she has arrived in Moscow knowing that she is coming to a friendly country, and will be accredited to a friendly government. She will do everything possible to improve relations and establish cooperation between the two countries. Meyerson thanks Molotov for his willingness to assist her in her work.

Molotov asks whether Meyerson has any other questions.

Meyerson answers that she has one technical question which it may not be necessary to ask Molotov, since the appropriate Soviet organizations evidently are already working on it. It is the same question that worried Ershov in Palestine, namely premises for the legation.

Molotov replies that the ministry will assist the legation of the State of Israel in this matter.

When they say goodbye, Molotov says that he will let Meyerson know when the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet will be able to receive her.

At this point the conversation, which has lasted 30 minutes, comes to an end.

Notes taken by O. Troianovskii

157
G. Meyerson to M. Shertok (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 7 September 1948

In response to my letter of yesterday,[1] I was received today by Molotov in the Kremlin for a very cordial talk which lasted half an hour. He expressed his confidence in the strength of our state and government and that we will prevail. I raised the issue of the borders. Full report in letter.[2] He will inform me of the date of the accreditation ceremony.

Golda

1. See Doc. 155.
2. No letter has been traced, but the meeting has been reported *in extenso* by Namir, *Shlihut beMoskva*, pp. 41–2. See also Doc. 156.

158
V.A. Zorin to G.G. Karpov (Tel Aviv)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.12, LL.9–11
Moscow, 10 September 1948
Secret

To the Chairman of the Committee on the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church, Attached to the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Comrade Karpov,
In reply to your No. 715/S, of 19.8.1948:

The minister of the USSR in Israel, Comrade Ershov, reports that, according to information gathered by legation personnel visiting Jerusalem, the former head of the so-called Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, the Archimandrite Antonii, who is subordinate to Metropolitan Anastasii,[1] was indeed placed under house arrest by the Jewish authorities in May this year.[2] Later, however, under pressure from Red Cross representatives, Antonii was set free and at the end of July handed over to the Arabs.

The Russian Ecclesiastical Mission is at present headed by the monk Mefodii, whom Antonii left as his deputy with limited powers. His secular name was Popovich.

The buildings and other premises belonging to the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and to the Palestine Society are in a generally satisfactory condition, though there has been some damage from gunfire and bombardment: holes in walls, broken windows, holes in the cupola of the Russian Cathedral, the roof of the Sergievskii compound pierced by a bomb, and so forth.

In the Gornenskii monastery the priest Isai remains in charge. He recognizes the authority of the Moscow Patriarchate. The monastery is in good order.[3]

The Tiberias and Nazareth monasteries have no one to look after them, since all the monks have fled to the Arabs.

The archives left behind by Archimandrite Antonii are quite substantial and contain his correspondence with the British authorities, with Metropolitan Anastasii and many church communities. Antonii left in a hurry and could not take a large quantity of documents with him. He told the monk Mefodii that

---

1. Metropolitan Anastasii — head of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (see Doc. 45, n. 3).
2. On 19 August 1948, the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church reported to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that, according to information it had received, the head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, Archimandrite Antonii, 'representative of Metropolitan Anastasii' had been arrested by the Israeli authorities. The council requested that the ministry validate the information and advise it whether circumstances permitted the appointment of a representative of the Moscow Patriarchate as head of the Jerusalem mission (see AVP RF, f.089, op.1, p.2, d.12, l.6).
3. Isai sent the following telegram to Moscow on 29 April 1948: 'His Holiness Patriarch all Russia Aleksii Moscow. I beseech your Holiness take immediate measures for defence of Russian holy places church property. Ecclesiastical and lay persons suffer great hardship, physical and material losses. Beg your holy prayers and blessing Monk Isai' (ISA, 130.11/2501/16).

he had 'hidden [the most important documents] in the archives, and they will not be easily found'.

The most important of the Ecclesiastical Mission's documents were photographed by the Jewish authorities and the film deposited in the military archives. They will be available to us as soon as we request them.

In view of the situation in Jerusalem, Comrade Minister Ershov has made the following proposals:

1. We should, in the near future, appoint and send to Palestine a head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission from the Moscow Patriarchate, and also a representative of the Russian Palestine Society. These should be given the necessary legal authority and the power to receive and manage the property (plots of land, buildings and other premises) belonging to these organizations. Comrade Ershov thinks that we should not apply to the Israeli government for the transfer of this property to us, since the Jews might take this as a sign of our own doubts about the legal succession of the property and our rights of ownership.

At the same time, Comrade Ershov thinks that the government of Israel will not at present object to the arrival of our representatives.

2. In order to preserve the remaining archives of the Ecclesiastical Mission and the Palestine Society from possible destruction or plunder, all these documents should either be handed over to the Anglo-Palestine Bank or taken under official Israeli escort to Tel Aviv to be kept in our legation.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR agrees with Comrade Ershov's proposals. As for the archives, pending coordination with you, he is being instructed to take charge of them himself and send them to Tel Aviv for safe keeping in our legation.[4]

Please take the necessary measures to select candidates for head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, and one or two priests to assist him; do what is necessary for them to be presented to, and approved by, the appropriate authorities.

Please inform the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR of any steps you take.

V. Zorin
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR

4. In a conversation with Ershov on 17 August 1948, Czechoslovak consul in Jerusalem Jan Novak noted that the bulk of the mission's documents were in the safe keeping of the Jerusalem branch of the Anglo-Palestine Bank (see AVP RF, f.089, op.1, p.1, d.3, l.43).

159
G. Meyerson to M. Shertok (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 11 September 1948

My visit to Molotov was reported in the press. I visited the doyen of the diplomatic corps, the Chinese ambassador, who returned the visit yesterday. Today I presented my credentials in the Kremlin. The ceremony was very impressive, a complete success, and conducted in a friendly atmosphere. Our legation personnel made a good impression. Because Shvernik[1] was on vacation his deputy, RSFSR President Vlasov, presided, as is the custom. I spoke in Hebrew, the chief of protocol interpreted. Vlasov's warm remarks were translated into Hebrew by Levavi. My conversation with Vlasov touched on political issues.

[...][2]

Golda

160
G. Meyerson to M. Shertok (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 12 September 1948

Ceremony of presenting credentials reported in press on page one. All participants named. We spoke with the Rabbi of Moscow (Shlifer) and visited the [Choral] Synagogue. There were touching scenes, also in the street. Members of legation were called up to the Tora. Ratner in uniform. Twenty thousand people celebrated declaration of our state at the synagogue.[1]

Golda

Doc. 159

1. N. Shvernik, chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.
2. A brief paragraph dealing with administrative matters has been omitted.

Doc. 160

1. For more details of this visit and further visits to the synagogue, see Namir, *Shlihut beMoskva,* pp. 48–50, 64–67; also Docs. 179, 180. The celebration referred to took place in July.

161
Sh. Friedman to G. Meyerson (Moscow)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2492/16
Tel Aviv, 12 September 1948

Dear Golda, Shalom and Greetings,

We were delighted to receive your first cable messages, and we await more detailed reports on the start of your activity. I reiterate all our sincere congratulations on your first steps – may all our wishes and hopes for your mission be realized in full.

Since your departure, you have been sent newspapers and informative material from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Please inform if all is received in good order. There may be hitches, as with any beginning, and if so – don't be upset. We will do everything to rectify the situation. (We are now preparing a shipment of more material).

The things handled by Piekatch are almost ready and will be sent in the coming days. We have taken note of your cabled request regarding shipment.

Among the informative material I am sending you is a special survey of the session of the Zionist General Council. The survey, together with the reports you will read in the press, will give you a full picture of the session.[1]

I will give you a few details about our relations with the Soviet legation here. Relations are good and correct. Following your departure M[oshe] S[hertok] held a lengthy conversation with the Minister. He provided information concerning an issue that was then on the agenda: the mediator's attempts to limit *aliya*, similar American efforts in the [DP] camps, and the protest by our legation in Washington concerning this issue.[2] A full exposition was provided about our opposition in principle to any numerical limitation on *aliya*, about the difference between the first truce, which was limited in time, and the present one, about our objection to the mediator's authority to make rulings of this sort, and about why we do not submit the issue to the Security Council but prefer leaving it to his initiative. The minister was very attentive. In a previous conversation which I had with the minister, he showed an interest in the future of the other part of the country:[3] an independent state or annexation to another state (or states). My presentation was in the spirit of the discussions we held with you and with other members before your departure.

After your departure a special performance was held for the Soviet legation at the Ohel Theatre of the musical 'King Solomon and Shalmai the Shoemaker'.

1. The General Council ('Actions Committee') of the Jewish Agency convened in Tel Aviv at the end of August. The main topic of discussion was the division of responsibilities between the provisional government and the Jewish Agency. The American members demanded a clear-cut separation between the two bodies. At the end of the meeting it was resolved that the Jewish Agency would retain the functions of directing immigration and settlement in Israel, while all other functions would be relegated to the Israeli government.
2. See Doc. 154.
3. That is, the territory allotted to the Arab state by the partition resolution.

All went well. We were pleasantly surprised when the minister himself attended, having been told earlier that he did not intend to be present at the performance. We played our anthem and the Soviet anthem, the auditorium was draped with flags. Halevi's[4] greetings were well done. The guests enjoyed the performance and afterwards attended a reception, at which the minister made a brief speech and wished our popular art well (this was the only speech at the reception). He then had his picture taken with the company.

The minister has begun a round of calls on the country's leaders. To date he has met with Sprinzak, as head of the State Council, with the rest of the Presidium also participating. He also met with the minister of labour.[5] They held a practical, interesting talk on our development plans for the country and on the workers' achievements in the realm of working conditions. His next visits will be with the ministers of justice, transport, and finance. I participate in all these visits. In the meantime, other legation personnel have also made visits. The counsellor[6] met with the foreign minister and several responsible officials from our ministry. The first secretary,[7] the consul-general,[8] and the cultural and press attaché[9] met just with various staff members, including the directors of the relevant departments. Besides our ministers, the minister plans to visit the mayor,[10] the Industrialists' Union, and the Histadrut. Please note the order.

There was much to do in connection with the legation building. Thanks to vigorous intervention from the appropriate places, the building on Rothschild Boulevard that we are placing at their disposal was speedily evacuated. Arrangements are now being made so they can move in during the next few days. There were many difficulties, but we felt obliged to make every effort to overcome them. The housing arrangements for the legation staff are being dealt with energetically. In addition, everything possible is being done to speed up the municipality's completion of the building that will serve as their permanent location. They would like to move in by the beginning of November and to hold the reception there on 7 November.

The legation wants very much to set up a direct cable connection with Moscow urgently. I brought Friedberg (Prihar)[11] for a specific discussion with the counsellor on this subject. Probably a provisional arrangement will be operating within two or three weeks. I will inform you separately about developments in this matter. At the same talk I raised several matters at the request of D[avid] R[emez]:[12] regular air transport, direct navigation on the

---

4. Moshe Halevi, director and manager of the Ohel Theatre.
5. Mordechai Bentov, minister of labour and reconstruction in the provisional government of Israel.
6. Mikhail L. Mukhin, counsellor of the USSR legation.
7. Vladimir I. Rozhkov, first secretary of the USSR legation.
8. Nikolai P. Sergeev, second secretary in the USSR legation.
9. Mitrofan P. Fedorin, second secretary, in charge of cultural relations and press, USSR legation.
10. David Rokah, mayor of Tel Aviv.
11. Zvi Friedberg, director of postal services.
12. David Remez, minister of communications.

Danube, philately. All these constitute a single package in the field of transportation. I assume that these topics will be the subject of a conversation that will take place in the coming days between the minister and D[avid] R[emez].

The legation's consul-general, accompanied by one of the attachés, visited Jerusalem. We made the appropriate arrangements, which were carried out splendidly. We were thanked for the arrangements. Among other places, they visited the Russian Compound and the [Russian] convent in Ein Karem. In the coming days Rabinovich, who deals with Russian property in the country, will meet with the legation's consul-general, and this question will apparently soon be on the agenda. I will inform you of developments.

I am working on ties between our cultural institutions and the attaché for cultural affairs. To date he has already met with the members of Ohel, 'Music for the People', the Philharmonic Orchestra, the National Library, and Klinov.[13] I will inform you of anything important in these talks.

Now – my requests to the legation.

(a) The Russian-language bulletin.

I think it would be better if you issue the bulletin in Moscow on the basis of the material you will get from here. You have a clearer conception about the kind of material that should be published and the institutions it should be sent to. What do you think?

(b) Search for [missing] relatives.

The Soviet consul-general here stated that they do not deal with this matter and will not accede to requests from private individuals. There is a central office for such searches in Moscow, run by the Central Executive Committee of the Congress of Soviets[14] to which every individual must apply. I assume that you have clarified whether you will be able to deal with this. We would gladly accept a positive answer on this subject.

With this I conclude my first letter to you. Other subjects will be dealt with separately.

We await reports about [the legation's] initial steps, your meetings, and everything concerning the legation. Shalom to all.

S.F.

13. Yeshayahu Klinov, director of the Department of Press and Information at the Ministry of the Interior.
14. This usage is anachronistic. In fact, this body had been superseded in 1936 by the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

162
Meeting: Y. Ratner – I. Seraev
(Moscow, 13 September 1948)

MEMORANDUM: ISA 130.09/2514/6
Secret

Present were General Seraev, his deputy, and his adjutant, who took the minutes of the conversation.

1) Following the usual opening remarks, I asked whether military attachés customarily paid a visit to the doyen of attachés, in the manner of diplomats. The answer I received was that as far as they knew there was no such custom, and they advised me to begin by visiting only those [attachés whose countries] have recognized Israel, such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc.

2) As regards appearing in uniform, they said that attachés customarily appear in uniform only when making official visits, at manoeuvres, and so forth, but not on the street, at the theatre, etc.

3) General Seraev remarked that he would soon be going on vacation and that during his absence I would be able to meet with his deputy. I took the opportunity to ask whether I could raise a few questions of 'high policy' even before his trip, bearing in mind that our armies were only in a state of truce, and hence the need for urgency. As an example, I asked about [military] textbooks and about possibilities of advanced courses for commanders. True, we had great military successes, but we realized that after the rapid transition from an underground to a regular army and the appointment of many new commanders, it was necessary to reinforce our knowledge and experience. General Seraev said it was good I had raised this question at an early stage, because otherwise I might have wasted time. For the Russian military authorities, too, these questions were a matter of 'high policy' and were decided by the government. Therefore, the quickest route was for our legation to approach the government of the Soviet Union, or, in other cases, for our government to make an approach through the Soviet Union's legation in our country. The Red Army would give its opinion regarding textbooks, which ones it was undesirable to allow out of Russia, or, concerning the possibilities of advanced courses, *which* schools and *which* manoeuvres were relevant. They would help me find and choose books, but our legation has to transmit the list of books I want to the [Soviet] foreign ministry for approval.

4) Concerning manoeuvres, I was told that the general manoeuvres which the military attachés usually observe have terminated and will not resume until spring – and if we want a special permit, [the procedure] is the same as applications for advanced courses, etc. (I have the impression that this is a difficult issue).

5) After we returned to the atmosphere of a first visit and getting acquainted, I was told in jest that they did not usually have the luxury of

attachés speaking Russian; I took this as an obvious provocation and related my past. I explained that many of the [Israeli] army's founders were from Russia, but that the younger generation did not understand Russian, and therefore there was a potential danger that communication between us would be severed unless we renewed it through literature, study, etc.

I was asked how many generals we had; I replied that we had opted for a very modest approach and that we had only one brigadier-general and less than one major-general per ten thousand soldiers. Here I noted that I was sent to Russia because it was thought that in the present situation it was desirable to have an army man in Moscow who could provide information and present the Israeli case based on first-hand knowledge of the events of our surprising war and the current military situation, as well as explain the military background of our political demands.

6) The character of the conversation was not uniform: formal on the part of General Seraev himself, very cordial on the part of his deputy, a naval officer.

7) Practical conclusions: In order not to waste time I plan to select during the next two days a relatively small number of military books (100–150) and to submit the list as a 'test case' for approval by the Foreign Ministry, and in the meantime to continue drawing up additional lists. I would suggest also raising the question of the possibilities for advanced courses using the same method.

163
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – Y. Rabinovich (Tel Aviv, 13 September 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.3, LL.41–2
Secret

CONVERSATION WITH RABINOVICH, THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE JEWISH AGENCY ON MATTERS CONCERNING RUSSIAN PROPERTY

I received a visit from Rabinovich, who was appointed, on about 20 May 1948, to represent the Jewish Agency on matters concerning Russian property on Israeli territory. Rabinovich told me that he had been dealing with the question of Russian property in Palestine from the beginning of this year, and he was 'doing all he could to see that it was handed over to the Soviet Union'. When, at the beginning of May 1948, the mandatory authorities passed a law on the

transfer of this property to the Administrations of the Ecclesiastical Mission and the Orthodox Palestine Society,[1] he had all printed copies of this law destroyed with the aid of a Palmah unit, assisted by the workers and the owner of the printing house. But about 30 copies were not destroyed, and have been kept in the Jewish Agency. Rabinovich promised to send one copy to our mission.

Rabinovich told me that he was at present supplying pilgrims and nuns with foodstuffs and financial help, and was trying to get some rent from persons and institutions occupying Russian premises, but here he was running into the tenants' unwillingness to pay their arrears because of 'the uncertain legal status of the property'. He wanted to sign contracts with the Jewish civil and military institutions which were occupying the Russian buildings. These contracts would have to be the same for all premises. When I asked who could sign such a contract on behalf of the owner, Rabinovich answered that he could do this, since he was 'the authorized representative *[upolnomochennyi]* or custodian of the property. Rabinovich said that a temporary system of trusteeship arrangement over the Russian property had been introduced by the Jewish authorities following the British model, because otherwise the property would have been 'left without supervision'. I told him that he had no right to conclude either long-term or short-term leases on behalf of the Orthodox Society or the Ecclesiastical Mission, and should do nothing more than supply the Russian pilgrims and nuns with food and collect what was due from the tenants. Rabinovich assured me that he would do just that.

Rabinovich promised to let us have a photocopy of the deeds of purchase of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission as soon as the person who was keeping them in safety arrived in Jerusalem.

The conversation lasted 20 minutes. The second secretary of the legation Sergeev and the attaché Semioshkin were present.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

164
Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – G. Meyerson (Moscow, 15 September 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.2, LL.7–8
Secret

Meyerson came to see me for a formal visit, accompanied by the counsellor of the legation.

After the usual greetings, Meyerson spoke at great length about the reasons why the State of Israel needed the immigration of Jews from other countries.

1. See Doc. 121, n. 2.

In support of this view, she pointed out that the state was at war, and was, therefore, quite naturally suffering losses of manpower. Beyond that, Meyerson considered that the State of Israel would grow strong only when its population had increased several times. As regards the current state of affairs on immigration, Meyerson complained that the British and Americans were raising obstacles to the entry of Jews into Israel at a time when a large number of Jews, especially from Western countries, would like to take up residence in Israel as quickly as possible.

I asked Meyerson what the State of Israel could do about immigration. She answered that if military actions stopped, the State of Israel could absorb one million Jews in five years, and altogether, according to experts, could find room for three or four million within its present frontiers.

I commented that the number of Jews in countries where discrimination against them existed was much greater than the figure she had given. Therefore the solution to the Jewish question was linked to the democratization of these countries and to the destruction of the discriminatory regimes. Meyerson agreed with this.

Continuing the conversation, Meyerson asked how she could keep in touch with the personnel of the Ministry and whether she could invite specialist members of her own staff, such as the military attaché, to take part in these discussions.

I answered that she could meet leading members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR in the usual way.

Director of the Near and Middle East Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR
I. Bakulin

165
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Shertok (Tel Aviv, 16 September 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.3, LL.1–4
Secret

I went to see Shertok at his invitation. He said that Ben-Gurion had asked him to tell me in confidence about the recent exchange of views between the government of Israel and the US government, which had taken place on the initiative of the US. McDonald had recently visited Shertok and, as instructed by the State Department, had told him that the US government considered the creation of the State of Israel to be a positive factor in the Near East, believing that Israel would develop in a way that would benefit its neighbours. The US

attached great importance to the cease-fire and intended to insist on extending it. This it regarded as a necessary condition for opening peace negotiations. It wanted the cease-fire to continue in order to achieve peace, not to wear Israel down; it would decisively oppose any breach of the cease-fire. If this took place, it would insist in the Security Council that sanctions be applied to the guilty party in accordance with the UN Charter.

Shertok said he had answered this by telling McDonald that, in fact, there was no sign of the conditions of the cease-fire being observed. For instance, the water supply to Jerusalem was to have been restored, but the Arabs had blown up the Latrun pumping station with impunity, and sanctions against them had not been applied.

McDonald asked three questions:

1. Does the government of Israel think it possible to approach a peace settlement as part of an agreement with Transjordan, by exchanging a large area of the Negev desert for the fertile part of Western Galilee which is under military occupation by the State of Israel?

2. For all its conviction that Jerusalem should be an international city (enclave) in accordance with the UN resolution of 29 November, the US government is ready to consider any other arrangement in Jerusalem which is acceptable both to Israel and the Arab countries, on condition that the security of the holy places and access to them be assured. (The US has made no specific proposals on this matter.)

3. The US government would like to know whether the government of Israel intends to take any constructive measures to improve the indigent conditions of the Arab refugees, since this would influence world opinion. (Nothing was said about the refugees returning to the State of Israel.)

McDonald added that, in the US government's opinion, any demands by Israel exceeding what was envisaged in points 1 and 2 would be an obstacle to the achievement of a lasting peace in Palestine. If the government of Israel could assure the US government of its support on these points, then the latter would be ready to recommend this plan to the mediator and to Britain, which is capable of influencing the Arab countries.[1]

Shertok said that he had immediately given McDonald a preliminary answer, but since the Americans had asked whether Ben-Gurion and Shertok shared a common opinion on this, he was then received by the Prime Minister, and was given a joint, coordinated reply.[2] Shertok went on to say that they had answered that the government of Israel welcomed the active interest of the US in the achievement of peace in Palestine and considered the present situation to be intolerable and unjust. Britain was counting on Israel's attrition by the

---

1. See Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald) to the Israeli Foreign Minister (Shertok), 6 Sept. 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. V, pp. 1377–8; *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, pp. 570–1; ibid., No. 493, pp. 570–1.
2. See M. Shertok to A. Lourie, 10 Sept. 1948, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, No. 504, pp. 587–8.

cease-fire, and the government of Israel should note that this was not the line of the US.

Specifically the responses of the government of Israel were as follows:

1. Shertok said that they would oppose the exchange of territory. Ben Gurion told McDonald: 'The Arab world is plentifully supplied with deserts, but mankind has seen no benefit from this. We, however, hope to do something there, so we have no reason to renounce the deserts of the Negev.'

We stated that the partition boundaries envisaged in the resolution of 29 November needed some correction, since the assumptions on which they were based had not been justified, and also certain events had taken place. Already at the UN Assembly we demanded and argued that Western Galilee should be included in the State of Israel. The US was against this. One of their arguments was that the Arab population of the Arab state in Palestine would need some reserves of land, and these could be found in Galilee. We answered that annexing the Arab part of Palestine to Transjordan would give the Palestinian Arabs enormous reserves of land in Transjordan itself. We would claim Western Galilee 'as a supplement'.

2. As to the question of Jerusalem, we note the flexibility of the US government, which we also welcome. Ben-Gurion added, as his personal opinion, that there was, in general, a difference between arrangements made by force of arms and those made by agreement, and that he, as minister of defence, could recommend to his government that concessions be made to the Arabs in order to achieve peace (this applies to Jerusalem).

3. The issue of the Arab refugees should be divided into two questions: a) immediate assistance to them where they presently reside; b) settling them after the end of the war. The situation of the Arab refugees is the responsibility of the Arab states, who began the war with Israel and which resulted in the problem of the Arab refugees. 'Why should international monetary organizations, instead of the government of Egypt, spend money on the Arab refugees?' Shertok asked McDonald. We are not opposed to help from international organizations, but we are pointing out that someone is to blame for this. If we are admitted into the UN, we shall not refuse to take part in international aid. We cannot let the refugees return while there is a war or a cease-fire, which is just another variety of war. But we are ready to discuss this when the question is put on the agenda.

When I asked whether this meant that the Israeli government was not against the return of the refugees, Shertok answered that they were keeping the door open. They believed that the most rational thing would be to settle the refugees in the neighbouring countries, where there was plenty of land, water and a need for labourers. It would be in the interest of the Arab countries, the refugees themselves, the State of Israel, and of healthier relations to settle the Arab refugees in the neighbouring countries. Shertok added that he had mentioned to McDonald the example of the exchange of population between Turkey and Greece after World War I, which resulted in a significant

improvement of mutual relations.[3] This solution to the problem was just a suggestion, and we would be ready to discuss other options.

We pointed out to McDonald that it was hard to understand what the United States would recommend to the mediator and to Britain; for we were at war with the Arabs and not with the mediator and Britain. McDonald promised to pass on the Israeli government's answer, as given above, to the United States government.

I asked whether the acceptance of the United States' proposals was conditional on the taking of any positive measures, such as, for example, the grant of a loan, or recognition *de jure*, or help in joining the UN, and so forth. Shertok answered there had been no mention of a loan or recognition. There had been rumours that the president was thinking of doing something, but he was likely to favour recognition rather than a loan. We have reason to believe that McDonald was at present recommending that his government should recognize Israel *de jure*. Admission to the UN was also not mentioned, but we already have a promise from the US delegation to the UN (but not from the State Department) to support us. The government of Israel has looked into this, and decided to authorize its delegation at the UN to raise the matter in the Security Council at a convenient moment.[4] We have heard from Sobolev and Trygve Lie that we ought to 'test the waters', but our representatives think it impossible to sound out other delegations unless we have raised the question in the Security Council of admittance to the UN. The only way to find out people's attitudes was to put the question to them point blank. We might not get a majority, but we must not let this put us off, since we would not be alone in the corridors of the UN. Israel's failure to gain UN membership would encourage our opponents, but refraining from raising the question at the UN would encourage them even more, and therefore we decided to take the risk. We thought that the best moment would be next month, when the Chairman of the Security Council would be an American.

In conclusion, Shertok said that if the exchange of views with the US government continued and took place in Tel Aviv, he would again keep me informed.

Friedman, deputy director of the Eastern Europe Division, and Popov, the attaché, were present at the discussion.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

---

3. Reference is to the exchange of populations after the Greek–Turkish war of 1921. During this first organized massive population transfer in the twentieth century, 1,300,000 Greeks left Turkey, and 400,000 Turks left Greece.
4. Point 2 of the instructions given by the government of Israel to its delegation to the UN General Assembly on 10 September 1948 authorized the delegation to apply for Israeli membership in the UN (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel,* Vol. I, No. 502, p. 584).

166
Excerpt from the Instructions to the USSR Delegation to the Third Session of the UN General Assembly

COPY: APR RF, F.3, OP.65, P.7, LL.161-2
Moscow, 17 September 1948
Top Secret

[...]
22. *The Future System of Government in Palestine.*

If the Palestine question is placed on the agenda, the Soviet delegation should: a) expose the underlying reality of the so-called Palestine question by showing the real aims in Palestine of the United States and Britain, which are trying to increase their influence both there and in the Near East in general, in the interests of American and British monopoly capitalism; b) show that the aims pursued by the governments of the United States and Britain have nothing in common with the aims and tasks of the UN in strengthening peace and the security of nations, nor with safeguarding the interests of the Arab and Jewish peoples and realizing their right to self-determination and to independent and autonomous states; c) introduce a proposal for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops and foreign military personnel from the territory of the Jewish and Arab states in Palestine, whose formation was envisaged by the resolution of the General Assembly on 29 November. A proposal should also be introduced requesting that the Security Council adopt appropriate measures to avoid a renewal of hostilities in Palestine.[1]

167
Meeting: F.T. Gusev – G. Meyerson (Moscow, 17 September 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.1, LL.9–10
Secret

RECORD OF CONVERSATION WITH MINISTER OF ISRAEL GOLDA MEYERSON

On 17 September Mrs. Golda Meyerson paid me a formal visit, together with the counsellor of the legation.

After the usual greetings, Meyerson said that the Israeli legation had been installed in a hotel, and was intending shortly to move into a house. She was

1. Cf. Doc. 151 for an earlier version of para (c).

most grateful to the Soviet government for the concern which it had shown for the legation.

I remarked that there were considerable difficulties with living space in Moscow, but that the appropriate authorities would give all necessary assistance in housing the legation.

Meyerson went on to say that Moscow had made a great impression on her, especially since everything in her own country was on a much smaller scale. Meyerson went on to say that the government in Tel Aviv was housed in the buildings of the former German colony,[1] and she noted that during the war, the Germans had lived in this area in much better conditions than the Jews currently interned by the British in Cyprus.

When I asked about the conditions in which the Jews live in Cyprus, Meyerson told me that about thirty thousand Jews had been interned in Cyprus. They were in camps surrounded by barbed wire, under a strict regime, and were not even allowed to listen to the radio. The British were very much afraid that the Jews would get to Palestine. Meyerson also said that when she had last been in Cyprus, there were not thirty thousand, but twelve thousand Jews, because the rest had succeeded by various routes and methods in getting to Palestine.[2]

Meyerson then said that, in spite of the cease-fire, the State of Israel was experiencing the most difficult period of its life, since it had to keep the whole population on its toes and ready for mobilization. Meyerson emphasized that whereas the Arab states enjoyed the encouragement of the British, and had great opportunities to mobilize human resources in the countries of the Arab League, for Israel such opportunities were severely limited. In spite of this, Meyerson said that the Israeli armed forces had grown, and the general position of the State of Israel had become stronger in every way. Meyerson then said she expected that the Palestine problem would be discussed in one form or another at the forthcoming session of the General Assembly in Paris, and expressed the hope that the Soviet delegation would take a stance favourable to her country, as it had hitherto.[3]

I said that the position of the Soviet Union with regard to the State of Israel was well known at the United Nations. Our country understands the

---

1. Reference is to the village of Sarona, in the northern outskirts of Tel Aviv. This settlement was built and settled by the German Templars in the late nineteenth century. These settlers were exiled to Australia during WW II and the place was occupied by the British army. It subsequently housed the offices and ministries of the emerging state of Israel.
2. These detainees were gradually released as immigration permits became available. After the termination of the British mandate the British permitted immigration to Israel but kept the able-bodied men of military age on the island. These people, some 10,000 in number, were finally released in January 1949 (see Doc. 99, n. 8).
3. In a meeting with Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister V. A. Zorin on 14 September 1948, Meyerson dealt specifically with the issues related to the Palestine question which were to be discussed at the UN General Assembly in Paris: the borders of the State of Israel, control of Jewish immigration to Palestine, Arab refugees, an international regime for Jerusalem, and the port of Haifa (see AVP RF, f.021, p.1, d.4, l.159).

difficulties which the young State of Israel has to undergo, and believes that it will be able to overcome these difficulties.

In conclusion, Meyerson said that she would like to hope that she could rely on the help of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs if she needed it in the course of her work in Moscow.

I said that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would give her the help she needed.

The conversation lasted 40 minutes.

S. Kudriavtsev was present.

Gusev

168
G.M. Malenkov to I.V. Stalin

COPY: AVP RF, F.3, OP.65, D.7, LL.166–77
Moscow, 18 September 1948

To Comrade Stalin,

Before your departure, you gave instructions for the preparation of an article on Israel. The matter was somewhat delayed by Erenburg's absence from Moscow. Erenburg arrived a few days ago. Kaganovich, Pospelov, Il'ichev and I had a conversation with him. Erenburg agreed to write an article, but objected to the idea that it should appear under several names.

I enclose Il'ia I. Erenburg's article 'Concerning a Certain Letter'. If you have no other instructions, we would like to publish this article in *Pravda* on Tuesday 21 September.[1]

G. Malenkov

APPENDIX

Concerning a Certain Letter

I have received a letter from Alexander R. in Munich. He writes:

> You may be surprised by my appeal to you, but I have read several of your books, and I turn to you as a writer, for help in what is a difficult problem for me. I am a German Jew, anti-fascist of course, and a medical student. In 1938 I managed to leave Germany for France. When the Nazis invaded I hid and spent two years in the Maquis – I fought for two years in the 'Gabriel Péri' partisan unit. I came back to Munich after the victory. I must confess, I was naïve – I thought that fascism had been destroyed. Now I am subjected to daily insults. When Hitler was in power, I believed that it was a temporary insanity, and that antisemitism

1. On the top of the front page a handwritten note is appended: 'Comrade Stalin agrees'.

was just a symptom of the 'brown plague'. But why do I still have to read filthy slogans on the walls? Why must I hear students shouting at me, 'Go to Palestine.' Why was a friend of mine rejected for a university chair, and told frankly that 'there's no place for Jews here'. You cannot imagine how unbearable these insults are to one's dignity. I yearn for the simplest thing on earth, the right to exist without stigma. The Nazis put a yellow patch on our chests; now everything is subtler, but the same. Under American protection those same Nazis hold all the positions of responsibility. You probably know about this, and I'm not writing to complain or to inform you. I want to know, what is the attitude of people in the Soviet Union to the State of Israel? Do they see it as a solution to the so-called Jewish question? For me these are not abstract ideas, but a question of existence. In your novel The Storm I read terrible descriptions of the killing of Jews in Auschwitz and other places. My whole family was killed by the Nazis. What must we do so that these horrors are never repeated? Yesterday I heard one of my colleagues say, 'we must finish off the Jews'. I have never been a Zionist, but I am beginning to believe in the idea of a Jewish state. I await your answer, for you are a writer in the country in which I believe with my whole heart.

I believe that the question asked by my anonymous correspondent is of interest not only to him, and not only to Jews, but to all rational and moral people. And so I have decided to respond – not in a private letter but in a newspaper article.

Alexander R. asks how people in the Soviet Union regard the State of Israel. This question can be answered briefly: the Soviet government was the first to recognize the new state; it protested strongly against the aggressors, and when the armies of Israel defended their country against the Arab Legion, which was commanded by British officers, all the sympathy of the Soviet people was on the side of the victims and not of the offenders. This can be likened to the Soviet people's sympathy with the patriots of Vietnam rather than the French 'pacifiers'; with the patriots of Indonesia, rather than the Dutch oppressors.

However, Alexander R.'s first question must be answered at greater length. The representatives of the Soviet Union at the United Nations have said that our people understand the sentiment of the Jews, who have experienced the worst possible tragedy and have at last acquired the right to exist on their own soil. While they wish success to the working people of Israel, the Soviet people do not close their eyes to the trials which await all honest people in the young state. Apart from the invasion of the Anglo-Arab hordes, Israel is experiencing another invasion, quieter but no less dangerous – that of Anglo-American capital. For the imperialists, Palestine means, above all, oil. The competition between the plunderers – Standard Oil on the one hand, and the Anglo-Iranian Petroleum Company and Shell on the other – interferes in the life of a young country which has not yet had time to grow strong. The interests of the Palestine Potash Works, the question of the Kirkuk–Haifa pipeline, American plans for concessions and military bases – these are the things besides King Abdallah's cut-throats, that threaten Israel. It is not the representatives of the workers who stand at the head of the State of Israel. We

have all seen how the European bourgeoisie, with its great traditions and its ancient statehood, has betrayed national interests in the name of the dollar. Are the Soviet people supposed to think that the Israeli bourgeoisie will prove to be more conscientious and sagacious than the bourgeoisie of France and Italy? Hardly. We have faith in peoples, but even though the people in Israel are fighting bravely, this does not mean that they rule the country.

The State of Israel has many urban and rural workers, and it is they who bear the full burden of defending the country. At the same time they have to struggle against the greed of the bourgeoisie, for whom, as for any bourgeoisie, the war is first and foremost an occasion to turn profit. The secretary of the Communist Party of the State of Israel, Mikunis, rightly said not long ago: 'We have no tax on property, no tax on profits, and our industrialists have shamelessly increased their profits'.

I believe that the progressive people of Israel, and working people, will find the right road in these exceptionally difficult circumstances. I am convinced that socialism will be victorious the world over, including in Palestine. I believe in the future of Israel, but to my correspondent's second question – is the creation of this state a solution to the so-called 'Jewish question?' – I have to say no.

I have always thought and still think that the 'Jewish question', wherever it arises, can only be solved by general social, and therefore spiritual, progress. It can be solved not by utopians or diplomats but by the workers of all countries. I admired the courage of Israel's troops when they repulsed the attacks of the British hirelings, but I knew that the solution to the 'Jewish question' depended, not on military successes in Palestine, but on the victory of socialism over capitalism, and the victory of lofty internationalist principles, which are embodied in the working class, over nationalism, fascism and racism.

Obscurantists have long been inventing ridiculous stories designed to present the Jews as some sort of chosen beings, different from people around them. They say that Jews live a life apart, and do not share the joys and sorrows of the peoples among whom they dwell. The obscurantists maintain that the Jews are eternal rolling stones, people without any feeling for the mother country. They swear that the Jews of different countries are united by some mysterious ties. All these inventions found extreme expression in Hitler's loathsome book *Mein Kampf*, and were repeated by the SS, who buried elderly Jews alive, and threw young children into pits and furnaces.

Yes, the Jews lived separately, by themselves, when they were compelled to do so: for the ghetto was invented not by Jewish mystics, but by Catholic bigots. In the days when people's eyes were clouded by the fog of religion, there were bigots among the Jews, just as there were among Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox and Muslims. But as soon as the gates of the ghetto were opened, as soon as the fog of the dark ages had lifted, Jews of different countries joined the life of all other peoples.

Yes, many Jews left their homelands and emigrated to America. But they emigrated, not because they did not love their own land, but because violence

and humiliation deprived them of that beloved land. Was it only the Jews who at times sought salvation in other countries? Didn't Italians, Irish, Slavs in countries under the Turkish and German yoke, and Armenians and Russian sectarians as well? Jewish workers, like all other workers, are deeply attached to the land where they were born and where they grew up.

The Jews live in various countries, many in lands to which their ancestors came in the distant past; the first Jewish monuments in Tunisia, Georgia and Italy date from ancient times. The obscurantists say that there is some mystical link between all the Jews in the world. But there is little in common between a Tunisian Jew and a Jew in Chicago, who speaks American English, and even thinks like an American. If there really is a link between them, it is certainly not mystical: it is the link born of antisemitism. If tomorrow some madman were to appear and announce that everyone with red hair or a snub nose should be persecuted and destroyed, we would see a natural solidarity among all the red-heads and all the snub-nosed. The unspeakable atrocities of the German fascists, the total destruction of the Jewish population which they proclaimed and carried out in many countries, started with racist propaganda and insults, followed subsequently by the gas chambers of Maidanek. All this generated a feeling of deep unity among the Jews of various countries. This is the solidarity of the insulted and the indignant.

During the war the outstanding Polish poet Julian Tuwim wrote an article, 'We, Polish Jews'. He wrote about his patriotism:

> I am a Pole, because I was told so in my father's house; a Pole, because from infancy I was nurtured on the Polish language, because my mother taught me Polish poems and songs, because when I was first touched by poetry, it burst out in Polish words. I'm a Pole because it was in Polish that I declared myself in the trepidation of first love and in Polish that I babbled about the joy of that love. I'm a Pole, too, because birch and willow are more dear to me than palm and cypress, and Mickiewicz and Chopin than Shakespeare and Beethoven, for reasons which I cannot explain with any arguments. I'm a Pole because I was born and grew up in Poland, because I was happy and unhappy in Poland, because I certainly would want to return from exile to Poland, even if I could find supreme contentment somewhere else. I'm a Pole because after my death I want to be swallowed up by Polish soil, and none other.

Then Julian Tuwim explains what linked him with the Jews:

> There are two sorts of blood: that which is in the veins, and that which flows from them. Investigation of the first is a matter for physiologists. The man who attributes to blood not only physiological characteristics but some mysterious power – that man, as we now see, reduces cities to ashes, cuts people's throats and lastly, as we shall soon see, brings his own people to destruction. Another sort of blood is that which the leader of international fascism draws from the veins of mankind, in order to prove the superiority of his drop of blood over

my drop of blood; this is the blood of the millions of innocent victims, the blood of Jews, but not 'Jewish blood'. Why do I say 'we are Jews'? Because of this blood.[2]

Of course there are nationalists and mystics among the Jews. They created the Zionist program, but they did not settle Palestine with Jews. Palestine was settled with Jews by the ideologues of misanthropy, those adepts of racism, those antisemites who drove people from the places where they had been living for a long time, and made them look – not for happiness, but for the right to human dignity – at the other end of the world. We all remember the epic story of the ship *Exodus*, which was taking to Palestine from Western Germany refugees, who had by chance escaped the gas chambers of Auschwitz, and who now came under fire from British soldiers. The State of Israel reminds one of this ship, this ark, this raft on which there were people who had escaped the bloody flood of racism and fascism.

Why is my correspondent Alexander R. ready to find salvation in Israel? Because the people who have deprived him of his homeland are still lording it in Bavaria, because the German racists have found substantial defenders – racists from New Jersey and Alabama; because for a Bavarian Jew, Nazism is not just a terrible memory, but something alive, something protected and cultivated. Perhaps in these conditions there is nothing else for Alexander R. to do but to circumvent the obstacles put up by various 'observers' and to make his way to Israel. But if this is a solution to Alexander R.'s personal drama, it is no solution for the Jews who live in countries where money, lies and prejudice hold sway.

---

2. Here Erenburg grossly distorts Tuwim's treatise by ignoring key passages which impart a completely different meaning to the text. Among those omitted are the following:

> And right away I hear the question, 'What is meant by "we"?' The question is, to a large extent, justified. I was often asked by Jews and I always told them I was a Pole. Now I will be asked by Poles – for the vast majority of whom I was and remain a Jew... Here is a response to both... I am a Pole because I like being a Pole. It is my own business and I am not obligated to answer to anyone about it. I do not divide Poles into thoroughbreds and mongrels – this I leave for foreign and local racists. I divide Poles, like Jews, like people of any nationality, into clever and stupid; honest and dishonest, interesting and boring; offensive and offended; worthy and unworthy. I also divide Poles into fascists and anti-fascists... I could add that on a political level, I divide Poles into antisemites and anti-fascists, for antisemitism is the *lingua franca* of the fascists...
>
> The blood of Jews (not 'Jewish blood') flows in deep broad brooks; darkening streams merge into a swift foaming river, and in the new River Jordan I undergo a holy baptism – a bloody, burning tormenting fellowship with [other] Jews... We, Shloyme, Sruli, Moyshke, covered with dandruff and smelling of garlic, with our multitude of insulting nicknames, we have proved ourselves worthy of the likes of Achilles, Richard the Lion-Hearted and other heroes. We, in the catacombs and bunkers of Warsaw, in the fetid sewers, squashed our neighbours – the rats. We, armed with rifles, standing on the barricades; we, in the line of fire of the airplanes which bombed our wretched homes; we were soldiers of freedom and honour. 'Aronchik, why aren't you at the front?' He was at the front, good Sirs, and he died for Poland...
>
> (Tuwim, *My pol'skie evrei*, pp. 9–10).

On Julian Tuwim, see also Erenburg, *Sovest' narodov*, pp. 262–5.

Eli Mignaud, a Communist member of the French Parliament, answers the Zionist newspaper *Gazette d'Israël:*

> Only reactionary Zionist circles could take it into their heads that Israel would become a centre of attention for Jews throughout the whole world. French Jews are French citizens, they are integrated into the French nation, with whom they have struggled and laboured. For them, as for all Frenchmen, the future lies in victory over the remnants of fascism, over treachery, injustice and exploitation.

The largest number of Jews live in the US. When I was in America I saw how the transatlantic racists insulted the dignity of Jews, Negroes, Chinese and Italians. Everyone understands that American Jews are threatened by the growth of racism in the US, and everyone understands that the solution for American Jews lies not in the State of Israel, which could not accommodate even a small proportion of them, but in the victory of progressive America over racist America.

The Zionists say that the tragedy experienced in recent times by the European Jews can be explained by the fact that the Jews lived dispersed among other peoples. Let us remember that in the autumn of 1942 Hitler's hordes invaded Egypt, and were not far from Palestine. Even if there had been an independent Jewish state then, it could not have held back Rommel's armoured tank divisions. What saved the Jews of Palestine? Stalingrad, the Soviet people's victory over the fascists, because instead of a campaign to reach Jerusalem, Hitler had to concern himself with building defences.

In this fateful duel the Soviet people defeated the enemy of all peoples – bloodstained German fascism. Thereby the Soviet people saved the freedom of Europe, and the lives of millions of Jews. Not long ago I was in Wrocław. There the new Jewish settlers[3] invited the participants in the World Cultural Congress into their homes. There were Polish scholars and Negro writers, Brazilians and Czechs. One girl in the Pioneers [scouts] addressed the Soviet delegate with the following words: 'Tell the Soviet people that we, the Jewish children of Wrocław, bring flowers to your countrymen who rest in a mass grave. Tell the Soviet people that we know who saved us from destruction.'

Yes, there is only one solution to the 'Jewish question', and that is the victory of the progressive forces of mankind. If we imagine for a minute a terrible scenario, and picture the triumph of world reaction, then we could say with confidence that the State of Israel would turn into a new Auschwitz or Maidanek.

Before the war, fascism ruled in various countries of eastern and south-eastern Europe. The Jews were persecuted there – it is enough to mention the Iron Guard[4] or the pogroms in pre-war Poland. Then the Nazis came. They

---

3. Following the war, 157,420 Polish-Jewish refugees who returned from the Soviet Union to Poland were settled in the formerly German territories in Silesia and around Wrocław.
4. A right-wing antisemitic movement in Romania. The Iron Guard initiated anti-Jewish riots and pogroms in pre-war Romania and took an active part in the transportation and massacre of Romanian Jewry during the war.

encouraged looters from the dregs of the population, and organized the mass killing of Jews. But then, under pressure from the people, with the help of the Soviet army, the fascist rulers fell, and those who dreamed of a return to pre-war ways, all those half-liberals and half-pogrom-organizers fled abroad. The workers took power into their own hands. And then I saw with what zeal and with what patriotism the Jews in the various People's Democracies rebuilt their ruined towns, worked, studied, wrote books, planted trees. In Poland, where before the war the Pilsudski boys[5] mocked the Jews, there appears to be no town without its Ghetto Heroes Street, for the heroic struggle of the Warsaw Jews against the occupying forces earned the admiration of the entire Polish people. A few years ago, when the fascist dregs tried to organize a pogrom in Kielce, the people's government punished them as enemies of Poland.[6] The Bulgarian people managed to resist sending Bulgarian Jews *en masse* to the death camps; and after 9 September[7] the people's courts condemned the Bulgarian fascists, whose hands were stained with Jewish blood. Now the Bulgarian Jews, among whom there are many former partisans, are building their new democratic state together with all the Bulgarian people. Their future is not overseas, but in the woods of Sofia, in Plovdiv and in Ruse.

In tsarist Russia the ruling caste, wishing to protect itself from the people's wrath, insinuated that the Jews were to blame for poverty, dissension and disorder. The Black Hundreds[8] organized bloody pogroms. High officials came up with one restriction after another. But the Russian people had no part in these crimes. In his article 'On Antisemitism', Maksim Gorky rightly commented that the terrible blight of antisemitism had not touched the simple Russian people.[9] The best representatives of the Russian intelligentsia spoke up loudly against antisemitism: Let us remember Lev Tolstoy's 'I Cannot Keep Silent',[10] Saltykov-Shchedrin's sarcasm,[11] Pirogov's noble speech[12] and

5. In Russian, *pilsudchiki*. Marshal Jozef Pilsudski ruled Poland from 1926 to 1935.
6. See Doc. 66, n. 8.
7. Bulgaria was liberated by the Red Army on 8 September 1944; a new government was established on the following day.
8. Reactionary group which emerged in Russia after the revolution of 1905. It attacked liberals and terrorized the Jewish population.
9. Reference is to Maksim Gorky's article published in his book *Publitsisticheskie stat'i*, pp. 82–5. The first part of the article was originally published in *Pravda* of 26 September 1929 and dealt with cases of antisemitism in the USSR. The second part was added in 1931 from written testimony of Gorky for the 1927 Paris trial of the Jewish student Samuel Schwarzbard, who assassinated the Ukrainian political leader, Simon Petlura, in revenge for pogroms against the Jews during the Civil War in Ukraine.
10. The reference here is to Lev Tolstoy's 1908 article, 'Ne mogu molchat', which dealt with mass executions by the tsarist army and the policy of those who participated in the 1905 Revolution. Tolstoy was particularly shocked by reports which appeared on 19 May 1908, regarding the execution of twenty peasants. See Tolstoi, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. 37.
11. A reference to the article by M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin (1826–89), entitled, 'Tul'skoe Veíanie', published after the 1881–82 antisemitic pogroms in southern Russia.
12. N.I. Pirogov (1810–81), Russian physician and educator. As head of the Odessa and Kiev educational districts (1856–58 and 1858–61, respectively), he promoted Jewish education and press. Reference here is to the speech given by Pirogov on 16 April 1861, on his departure from Berdichev, in which he discussed the origins of ethnic prejudice.

Korolenko's sincere words.[13] Maksim Gorky fought passionately and uncompromisingly against antisemitism, calling it 'revolting filth'. The first piece of legislation to ensure civic equality for the Jews was introduced into the State Duma by representatives of the Russian working class.[14]

The tsarist government artificially separated Jewish workers from their Russian comrades; but labour, the struggle, the blood of strikers and demonstrators proved to be stronger than all the prohibitions and prejudices. Progressive Jewish intellectuals lived the common life of all Russia, took part in the revolutionary movement, contributed their might to the cultural development of the country. Even in that bitter time the homeland was their homeland: they loved their own towns and villages, green Belorussia, the Dnieper in flood, all of our great and beautiful country.

V. I. Lenin, the founder of our state, repeatedly attacked antisemitism in his articles and speeches, calling it 'shameful'. The October Revolution brought freedom and equal rights to all the citizens of the Soviet state, including the Jews. Some of them regard Russian as their native language, others Ukrainian and others Yiddish, but they all treat the Soviet Union as their homeland, and they are all proud to be citizens of the country in which the exploitation of one man by another no longer exists. In 1931, when a terrible cloud hung over Europe – this was two years before Hitler's seizure of power – I. V. Stalin foresaw the cannibals' crimes and said:

> National and racial chauvinism is a vestige of the misanthropic customs which were characteristic of the period of cannibalism. Antisemitism, as the extreme form of racial chauvinism, is the most dangerous vestige of cannibalism.

When cannibalism was trying to swallow up Europe, the Soviet people, led by Stalin, crushed the cannibals. Soviet Jews, together with peoples of all the other nationalities, selflessly defended the high ideals of our society, and protected their native land. Girls, men, young and old, came out of the ghettos of Vilnius and Minsk to join the partisans. Every Soviet Jew came to love his native land even more dearly: he remembers the deaths of the innocent victims of fascism, he remembers fierce battles and fallen heroes; he is linked by comradeship-in-arms with every Soviet citizen, and with every inch of Soviet land, by precious graves.

Let my correspondent Alexander R. ponder the events of the past decade, and he will understand that the 'Jewish question' can only be resolved in one way: by the abolition of the 'Jewish question'.

---

13. Apparently a reference to a series of newspaper reports on the Beilis trial (1913) written by the Russian writer, V.G. Korolenko (1853–1921). From 1911–13, Korolenko took an active part in efforts of Russian and Jewish lawyers and public figures to combat the blood libel against the Jews.
14. The legislative draft of the Law on Civil Equality was introduced on 15 May 1906 in the State Duma by 151 members, most of them representing Russian liberals of the People's Freedom Party.

We feel sympathy with the Israeli workers' struggle; they have on their side not only Soviet Jews, but all the Soviet people – we have no supporters of Glubb Pasha here. However every Soviet citizen understands that it is not only the national character of a state which matters, but also its social structure. A citizen of a socialist society looks upon the people of any bourgeois state, including the State of Israel, as travellers who have not yet emerged out of a dark forest. The citizen of a socialist state will never be tempted by the fate of people who bear the yoke of capitalist exploitation.

The fate of Jewish workers of all countries is not linked with the fate of the State of Israel, but with the fate of progress, with the fate of socialism. Soviet Jews are now completing the construction of their socialist homeland together with all Soviet people. They do not look to the Middle East, they look to the future. And I think that the workers of the State of Israel, who are a long way from Zionist mysticism, now look to the North – to the Soviet Union, which is moving at the head of mankind towards a better future.

Il'ia Erenburg

169
Meeting: M.L. Mukhin – W. Eytan
(Tel Aviv, 20 September 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.4, LL.52–3
Secret

As instructed by the minister, I called today on Eytan, the director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I began the conversation by saying that the minister intended to pay a call in person on Mr. Shertok, in order to bring to his attention the wholly unsatisfactory implementation of certain matters on which they had reached complete agreement. I went on to say that the minister, not wishing to bother the [foreign] minister at that moment (17 September was the day when Bernadotte was murdered – M.M.),[1] had asked me to discuss these matters again with Eytan. The issues concern the accommodation of the legation and some related organizational matters linked with this:

1. The fact that there are no police stationed permanently at the Gat Rimmon Hotel, where the USSR legation is located at present, has made it possible for unidentified persons from among fascist elements in the population to make a criminal attack on the minister's car, from which, as is known, the state flag was torn, and which was itself put out of commission.

1. Count Bernadotte, the UN mediator, and French Colonel André Serot, chief observer in Jerusalem, were murdered in that city by a member of the secret Jewish terrorist group 'Fatherland Front' on 17 September.

2. The house on Rothschild Street is still not ready for the legation to move into. A junior member of the previous tenants' staff is still in the building; the small house on the property, which is intended for the legation, is still occupied by tenants. Repair work is being carried out extremely sluggishly. There are no telephones, and so forth.

3. We have no information on the allocation either of a building, or of 10-12 separate flats, to house the legation's staff, about which agreement was also reached.

4. Food supply for the legation's staff is completely disorganized. The management of the hotel ordered the restaurant to apply the local restrictions to the legation's diplomatic personnel. We were told that this order had come from the chief inspector of food distribution. We were not given the ration cards which exist in Israel. Today, for instance, something was allowed to happen which goes beyond the bounds of tactlessness. Allegedly, on the basis of the inspector's order, the minister was denied a second cup of coffee. Apart from what has been mentioned above, there are a number of other things which are evidence of abnormalities, but on which there is no reason to dwell in view of what has been said.

In conclusion, I emphasized that, according to existing diplomatic tradition, it was not acceptable in such cases to put the other party into a position in which he would have to make the same request several times over. From then on, and specifically in regard to questions mentioned above, we would not repeat our request. We would await implementation of the existing agreement. If this did not come about, we could only conclude that there was an unwillingness to do what had been agreed upon.

In answer to my speech, Eytan expressed great regret that there had been so many irregularities and promised to take immediate action to have them put right. He asked us to take into account the difficulties arising from the war and the incompetence of the staff. In my presence he began to give orders by telephone, and some to Friedman, director of the Eastern Europe Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who was present at the meeting.

At the end of my conversation with Eytan, Friedman saw me to the door and invited me to come into his office. Here he told me that some Soviet citizens, on the basis of verbal instructions from consular personnel in the legation, were refusing to be mobilized into the Israeli army.[2] In this connection, Friedman said that they had an agreement with, for example, the Polish consul, who put no obstacles in the way of mobilization of Polish citizens, but, where necessary, he could write a letter and immediately arrange for any individual to be exempted from recruitment. 'Of course', he added, 'this cannot serve as some sort of basis for you, but I would like to know your personal point of view'.

---

2. According to a 1946 estimate by Soviet officials, there were 206 Soviet citizens in Palestine (see Doc. 58, n. 4).

To this I answered: 'As for my personal point of view, all that I know is the general international rule that the citizens of one state are not liable to mobilization in the army of another.' I added: 'I know of a case in which the Israeli authorities did not mobilize a Soviet citizen, but employed him in the Ministry of Defence; a specialist in the repair of motor vehicles, he continued to be paid his wages and made no protest against these conditions.'

Friedman retorted: 'It's true that this is expensive, but it does not create a precedent, and we must think it over.'

Counsellor of the Legation of the USSR in Israel
Mukhin

170
Meeting: I.B. Konzhukov – M. Namir (Moscow, 21 September 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, D.2, L.10
Secret

At 3 p.m. today I received, at his request, the state counsellor of the Israeli legation, Namir. He came in order to pay a formal visit and to clear up a few questions of consular practice. Namir asked what the legation must do in order to obtain exit visas for its personnel and diplomatic couriers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I told Namir that in such cases the legation should send diplomatic notes to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR asking for the issuance of exit visas, and in the case of the couriers, also visas for their courier papers. Of course, passports and the courier papers should be attached to the note.

Namir also asked about the system of searching for people on the territory of the USSR. I told Namir that enquiries about people's addresses in the USSR are conducted by the Central Information Bureau attached to the Executive Committee of SOKK.[1] Foreign citizens address this Information Bureau through the appropriate information bureaus in their own countries. For an official search for persons in the USSR, the legation could send its enquiries to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR. In just the same way, the authorities and institutions of the State of Israel can address such enquiries to the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv.

Namir thanked me for the explanation.

Konzhukov

1. Russian acronym for the Soviet Red Cross and Red Crescent.

171
A.D. Shchiborin to V.A. Zorin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.8, L.2.
Moscow, 22 September 1948

To Comrade V.A. Zorin,

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the consulate-general of the USSR in Harbin, received two letters, and lists of Jewish refugees from Germany and Poland who are at present living in Harbin. These are to be passed on to the Israeli minister in Moscow, Golda Meyerson.

The author of these letters asks Meyerson, on behalf of 67 Jewish refugees, to give them permission to enter the State of Israel.

I think we could send these letters and lists to the Israeli legation through the proper channels and instruct the consulate-general in Harbin not to undertake such intermediary functions in the future.

I attach a draft note to the Israeli legation, and await your instructions.[1]

A. Shchiborin

172
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – Y. Riftin and L. Levite (Tel Aviv, 23 September 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.3, LL.21–3

Riftin and Levite came to see me at their request. Levite said that the United Workers' Party [Mapam] was playing an important role in the political life of Israel. In the last elections to the Histadrut, it received about 40 per cent of the votes. At least a hundred collective settlements, out of a total of 300 Jewish agricultural colonies, are under its influence. Since many of this party's settlements are located near the frontiers of Israel they bore the main thrust of the Arab forces. Before the formation of the Jewish army, units of the Palmah, which consists mainly of supporters of this party, formed the basis of the Jewish armed forces. At present a large number of the military commanders, including some generals, belong to Mapam. However this is not true of the general staff or other central military departments, where Mapai members predominate.

Riftin said that he had recently returned from America, where he had met Comrade A.A. Gromyko. He believes that the United Workers' Party is the most

1. See Doc. 187.

progressive party in Israel, where it is 'following the path laid down by the Great October Revolution'. At present, the party considers its main task to be winning the war, because only when it has defended its territory from the enemy, will it be possible to build a democratic state.

At first the party favoured the establishment of international trusteeship over Palestine (America, Britain, the USSR), but later gave full support to the United Nations' resolution on partition. It is a staunch supporter of cooperation with the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies, since it sees them as the main international support, which will be needed in order to build a democratic socialist state. It is therefore trying to arrange practical links with the Soviet Union in the hope of receiving some advice. For their part, they offer comprehensive information about Israel and the Arab countries. In addition, it would be desirable for the Soviet Union to give moral support to the United [Workers'] Party.

I asked about the party's attitude to the Bernadotte Plan.[1] Levite answered that the proposal to hand over the Negev to the Arabs had met with determined resistance since it would reduce the scale of immigration to Israel. This was something to which they could never agree in any circumstances since immigration was the cornerstone of Zionism. Moreover, if the Negev were handed over to the Arabs, it would become a British base. As for Jerusalem, the party had supported its internationalization, but had changed its initial position under the influence of events, since 'in the course of the war it was proven that the Christian powers pay no heed to the sacred character of this city'. Furthermore, Abdallah, the agent of British imperialist plans in the Near East, had his own ideas for this city, and a progressive party had to take account of this. In Levite's opinion, the progressive movement in Arab Palestine was so weak that at present it had no practical significance, but Mapam kept in contact with it nevertheless. The only real power was Abdallah, against whom they would have to struggle. The party considered that if decisions unfavourable to Israel were taken, the Jews would have to begin a war themselves in order to defend, in particular, the Negev, by force of arms. The party had nothing against the annexation of Western Galilee to Israel.

Speaking about the forthcoming elections to the Constituent Assembly and the prospects for development of the State of Israel, Riftin told me that their pre-election platform had been approved and consisted of the following: in foreign policy, orientation towards the Soviet Union and the new democracies; strengthening links with the Arab democratic movement. On the issue of Arab refugees, Levite said that the party's position included the following: return of refugees after the war, with the exception of 'warmongers'. In the sphere of domestic policy, a resolute struggle against fascist and terrorist organizations. At present the government was pursuing only the Stern group, while members of other fascist and terrorist groups were still at liberty. Legislation to institute a progressive tax, the burden of which would be borne by the bourgeoisie,

1. See Doc. 156, n. 4.

and not by the broad masses of the population; a struggle against clericalism, while retaining freedom of conviction; defence of its positions in the army, because 'with the support of the army, the party can be a significant force'; officials who served the British to be dismissed from the civil service.

When I asked what reaction there had been in the party to the Cominform-buro's decision on the Yugoslav Communist Party,[2] they answered that the resolution had not been discussed, and that they had very little material about this.

In conclusion I commented that the world was now split into a democratic and an imperialist camp, which meant that each party formed its foreign and domestic policies on the basis of these historic circumstances.

Semioshkin, the attaché of the legation, was present during the conversation.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

173
G. Meyerson to M. Shertok (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 24 September 1948

For your information. Along with an assessment of statements by the authorities, reiterating their staunch support for Israel and the visible manifestations of a friendly attitude towards the legation, we should not ignore the following facts:

a. The friendly comments by Zorin[1] and Gusev[2] – Molotov's deputies – and Bakulin[3] are interlaced with remarks which can be construed to mean that an

---

Doc. 172

2. The Cominform (Communist Information Bureau), was established in September 1947 at a conference of European communist parties in Poland, for purposes of propaganda and the interchange of information among communist parties, replacing the Comintern dissolved in 1943. On 28 June 1948, the Cominform released a statement which accused Marshal Tito and his aides of having retreated from Marxism-Leninism and of pursuing an anti-Soviet policy.

Doc. 173

1. The meeting with Zorin took place on 15 September. Golda Meyerson reported on the military and political problems confronting Israel. Zorin listened without comment, but promised to convey Israel's views to his government and to the Soviet delegation at the UN General Assembly session in Paris. He added that there would be no change in Soviet policy and that they would support any just claim put forward by Israel (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, No. 511, p. 595).
2. The meeting with Gusev, on 17 September, was mainly social. He repeated Zorin's promise that the Soviet Union would stick to its previous policy (see Namir, *Shlihut beMoskva*, p. 56).
3. The meeting with Bakulin, director of the Department of the Near and Middle East in the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, took place on 15 September; the main topic was immigration to Israel. Bakulin stated that the need for immigration was confined only to the Jews of non-socialist countries and voiced doubts as to Israel's capacity to absorb large-scale immigration (see ibid., pp. 54–6).

emigration problem exists in countries outside the bloc, and that it is doubtful whether our country, with its small size, can absorb all the millions from other countries. Therefore, a struggle for socialism in every country is critical for the Jews.

b. The press expresses support for our war, since our adversaries are imperialistic and our goal is true independence.

c. Erenburg's article in *Pravda*, on 21 September,[4] is actually pro-Israeli and anti-Zionist; rejects emigration from here, from Bulgaria and from the other People's Democracies, claims we have a capitalist economy and quotes Mikunis in the State Council testifying that workers' representatives do not head our government.[5]

The Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee has not yet approached us. We intend to initiate contact.

d. A British journalist sympathetic to our cause and close to the Communists,[6] who returned from a joint visit with Erenburg to Poland, relates that the government there is discussing emigration but is inclined against it.

e. In talks with foreign ministry personnel and with the Polish ambassador,[7] we sensed that they are convinced we are anti-British, but not convinced of our ability to be independent of America. Should we also raise here the question of Transjordan's admission to the United Nations?[8]

Shalom.

Golda

4. See Doc. 168.
5. Shmuel Mikunis, secretary-general of the Israeli Communist Party. Mikunis made this statement in the course of a debate on the Banknotes and Currency Ordinance (see Provisional Council of State, *Protocol Hadiyunim*, Vol. I, 15th Session, 16 August 1948, pp. 13–14).
6. Ralph Parker, correspondent of the British *Daily Worker* in Moscow.
7. Marian Naszkowsky, ambassador of Poland to the USSR.
8. The Americans suggested linking Transjordan's application with that of Israel, and hinted that Israel might send out feelers in Moscow in that regard (see Eban to Shertok, 5 Aug. 1948, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, No. 421, p. 460).

174

Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Shertok (Tel Aviv, 27 September 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, D.3, LL.24–7
Secret

I called on Shertok at his invitation. He said that the Israeli position at the UN General Assembly had been determined at a meeting of the government the previous day. Today there would be a closed session of the State Council which would discuss and confirm this government decision.

Shertok then went on to say that the British representative in Paris, Minister of State McNeil,[1] had met the Israeli representative Eban at his own initiative, and said that Britain would use all its influence to induce the Assembly to adopt Bernadotte's proposals.[2] Neither side, i.e. neither Arabs nor Jews, agreed with Bernadotte's proposals, but McNeil was convinced that they would have to reconcile themselves to them. If either side were to use force to resist the implementation of these proposals, Britain would demand the most decisive measures in the Security Council against that side (there was no mention of sanctions). Noting that he was speaking on Bevin's instructions, McNeil asserted that if Israel agreed to Bernadotte's proposal, Britain would recognize Israel *de jure*, and would be followed in this by other European countries. Eban replied that the mediator's proposals regarding the Negev were unacceptable because, in the first place, Israel would lose 26 experimental Jewish settlements,[3] second, it would be deprived of access to the Dead Sea, and third, it would be cut off from the Gulf of Aqaba.

Eban had also been visited by Marshall's representatives,[4] who tried to sound out Israel's views regarding the mediator's proposals, using as bait the possible *de jure* recognition of Israel by the US and a loan. Eban expressed astonishment that Marshall had agreed so quickly to the mediator's proposals, which required some time to be studied. Eban showed the Americans a copy of a telegram from Weizmann to his friends in Washington,[5] in which he asked them to use their influence to ensure that the Negev would remain in Israeli hands. This made an impression on the Americans.

---

1. Hector McNeil, secretary of state at the Foreign Office, member of the British delegation to the Third Session of the UN General Assembly. For this meeting see Eban to Shertok, 22 Sept. 1948, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, No. 533, p. 624.
2. See Doc. 156, nn. 4 and 5. For the recommendations in full, see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, *Companion Volume*, Editorial Note, p. 164.
3. Thus in the Russian text; but the reference is apparently to kibbutzim, the main form of Jewish settlement in the Negev.
4. Eban met with John K. Ross, US deputy representative to the UN, on 22 September 1948 (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, No. 532, p. 623).
5. Reference is to a telegram sent by Weizmann to Rosenmann (see ibid, n. 2).

Shertok went on to elaborate the Israeli government's position, noting that it had been accepted by a majority.[6]

'Under no circumstances', the Minister continued, 'will we make concessions on the issue of the Negev'.

Our task at this Assembly is to prevent the formation of a majority which would favour changing the previous UN resolution and acceptance of Bernadotte's proposals. We do not want bases of any foreign state to be established in the Negev. The Negev is important to us because it has great economic potential and access to the Red Sea.

As for the question of frontiers, the government has no objection to a reassessment of the partition lines in light of the new circumstances. The UN resolution of 29 November is still in force, but we must take account of the experience gained since then. We must make emendations in the light of the experience acquired in the new situation. For instance, Jaffa was to be an Arab enclave, but it has turned into a base for hostile activity against Tel Aviv. We proposed a cease-fire, and the mayor of Jaffa agreed, but then an Iraqi unit arrived and initiated military action. The unit commander forced the mayor to break off talks with us, and we were compelled to take the necessary steps. In view of this experience, we could not allow Jaffa to become a 'thorn' in Israel's 'flesh'.

When the resolution of 29 November was adopted, it was assumed that there would not be much resistance to its implementation, and that there would be an economic union of the Arab and Jewish parts of Palestine. If there were any flaws in the plan, the whole structure would be unstable. The frontiers proposed in the resolution of 29 November are virtually indefensible. It was assumed that they would not have to be defended. (Shertok pointed on the map to the partition lines and to the actual situation at the present time.) Experience has proved otherwise. We cannot possibly withdraw from the positions we now occupy in the Galilee.

The Jews had also agreed to the establishment of an international regime in Jerusalem, but the Arabs decided to seize it; the whole world remained passive, and we had to resist the Arabs by force. Jerusalem is very important to us for economic, spiritual and other reasons. We intend to demand the inclusion in Israel of the Jewish part of Jerusalem, which should be connected to the territory of the state by a broad corridor. An international regime could be set up in the Old City. If, for the sake of peace with the Arabs, it becomes necessary to hand over to them some part of the new city, we shall not object. Jerusalem must be linked with the coastal strip by a broad corridor.

We stand for the frontiers envisaged in the resolution of 29 November, with the adjustments indicated. We are against the exchange of territory in principle. The questions of the Galilee and the Negev are quite different. We say nothing

---

6. See 'Statement of the Government of Israel with Reference to the Bernadotte Plan, Issued in Paris, Sept. 22, 1948', *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, No. 531, p. 622.

and ask nothing with regard to the Galilee, since we have a presence there. Lebanon does not want to receive the remaining part of the Galilee because it is populated by Muslims, and that would give the Muslims a numerical advantage over the Christians who rule in Lebanon.[7]

Israel is opposed to turning Haifa into a free port since that would affect Israeli sovereignty, but is ready to leave a 'free zone' in the port of Haifa for such states as are interested – depending, of course, on its relations with those states. We will not, for example, give a 'free zone' in Haifa to Iraq as long as it boycotts our goods. We agree to recognize the concessions which have been granted to oil refineries. We shall not start cancelling these concessions.

As regards the airport at Lydda, the government will not agree to its conversion into a 'free airport', but it can allow privileged use on reciprocal terms.

It appears that, Britain and the United States will put heavy pressure on us, and entice us with such lures as loans, *de jure* recognition, etc., but we shall stand our ground.

Returning to the question of the Negev, Shertok said that 'some figures' in the government were contrasting the fertile land of the Galilee with the barren Negev, especially since it would be very difficult to defend the southern Negev.

We responded to them, saying that we were attracted by the expanses in the Negev, the vast territories, where, with our energy, we could do something there. As for the Galilee, it was already in our hands.

From the very beginning the State Department was against including the Negev in Israel. At the last Assembly, Shertok said, I was able to convince Johnson and the 'jurors' [UNSCOP members] from Guatemala, Czechoslovakia, etc., that the Negev ought to belong to Israel.[8] At the time Weizmann convinced Truman that Aqaba ought to be Jewish, but on the very next day, I was told in the State Department that they could not agree to such a decision. The US position remains unchanged until now.

I asked about the government's attitude to Bernadotte's proposal to create a so-called Conciliation Commission. Shertok answered that this proposal had not been rejected but everything would depend on the functions and competence of this commission. If its activity was to consist of carrying out surveillance of Israel, then the government was against the commission. But there would be no objection to the commission serving as a mediator, provided it did not interfere in Israel's internal affairs. It might perhaps try to

---

7. According to an unwritten agreement of 1943, a delicate Christian-Muslim balance, which reflected the more or less equal division of the Lebanese population, was to be maintained in the Lebanese government.
8. Reference is apparently to the discussions in the Ad Hoc Committee and its sub-committees on the borders of the Jewish state during the Second Regular Session of the UN General Assembly in autumn 1947. The initial American position was for the excision of the Negev; Ambassador Herschel V. Johnson, acting United States representative at the UN, changed his stance at the last moment, following a meeting between Weizmann and President Truman.

'reconcile' Israel with the Arab government in Gaza,[9] but this would be a difficult task because the mufti, who supported that government, was the most vicious enemy and executioner of the Jews. In principle Israel would prefer the formation of an Arab state in the eastern part of Palestine, but it was important to Israel who would head it. The mufti was trying to organize an Arab state, but the government of Israel would find it hard to agree with him. On the other hand, it would be difficult to accept that the Arab part of Palestine should become part of Transjordan. We shall carry out our manoeuvres, and consult you. The formation of the government in Gaza has led to a split in the Arab League, which will certainly affect the military situation. Our main enemy is Egypt, but it seems that it is against the establishment of foreign bases in the Negev. Egypt has only recently liberated itself from the British and will not tolerate the creation of new British bases on its frontiers. However, the British are trying to cajole Egypt by offering concessions on other issues, particularly the issue of Sudan.[10]

In answer to a question about Trygve Lie's proposal for the formation of security forces, Shertok said that the proposal was not clear to him. Marshall had been deliberately obscure on this point. Perhaps Trygve Lie hoped to persuade Marshall to change his mind, or thought that the US would get its own people into the security forces in one form or another – all this is still not clear. Whether these security forces are sent to Palestine or not, Israel could not and would not want to rely on them.

In conclusion Shertok said that he was leaving on Wednesday for Geneva in a special plane which the Israeli government was sending for Weizmann. Shertok would meet Weizmann there, and discuss a number of additional questions. The following day Weizmann was due to fly to Tel Aviv. While Shertok is away, in Tel Aviv the duties of minister for foreign affairs will be carried out by the prime minister and minister of defence, Ben-Gurion. Current business will be handled by Eytan, the director-general of the ministry of foreign affairs.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

---

9. On 22 September the Arab Higher Committee announced the establishment of an Arab government of Palestine, headed by Mufti Hajj Amin al-Husayni, with its seat in Gaza. King Abdallah of Transjordan denounced the establishment of this government.
10. Reference is to the dispute between Britain and Egypt over the revision of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936 (see Doc. 65, n. 4). In the beginning of 1947, the British notified the Egyptians, their partners in the joint condominium over Sudan, that they intended to prepare that country for independence. Following this move, the Egyptians broke off negotiations and referred the matter to the UN.

175
Sh. Friedman to G. Meyerson (Moscow)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2492/16
Tel Aviv, 28 September 1948

Dear Golda,

This is my third letter to you. In the meantime I received your report that the material we sent you had arrived. We ask that you confirm all shipments with the date on which they reach you.

Yesterday a conversation took place between M[oshe] S[hertok] and the Soviet minister here.[1] Before leaving for Paris,[2] the [foreign] minister explained to him our position on the mediator's proposals.[3] He informed him that after the proposals were made public there had been a first contact, following a lengthy break, with the British (Hector McNeil),[4] and he also briefed him on Eban's talks with the Americans. You are aware of the rationale and of our stand, and I will not repeat them. I will relate only the questions that were asked by the Soviet minister and the replies he received: When he was apprised that the English had referred to grave measures that would be taken should the sides not accept the proposals, he asked whether the Englishman was referring explicitly to sanctions. The answer was negative. As for our stand on the Negev, he asked whether it was supported by all members of the government, or was it the majority view. The reply was that there were some who had expressed doubts about our ability to defend the entire Negev, including its more distant areas, on our own, given that our prospects there were remote and problematic; however, it was emphasized that these were only the doubts of a few and that the majority clearly opposed the proposal. M[oshe] S[hertok] related the reasons cited by Eban for our opposition concerning the Negev and the reply of the Americans, who are influenced only by the fact of our 26 points of settlement in the Negev. The explanation to the minister was illustrated on a map of the country, and the existence of our settlements in the Negev also made an impact on him. He was given a thorough explanation of the tremendous advantages that Galilee possesses for us, and the fact was stressed that this area was already in our hands therefore we were not raising any questions about it and we did not agree to link the [Galilee] issue with that of the Negev. It was also stressed that with respect to Jaffa our position had changed completely after 29 November, because of our bitter experience with the role played by Jaffa in the first months of the war. Concerning Jerusalem, the minister was told that we opposed transferring the Old City to the Arabs, that we favoured transferring the majority of the New

1. See Doc. 174.
2. For the session of the UN General Assembly.
3. See Doc. 174, n. 2.
4. See Doc. 174, n. 1.

City to the Jews, and that we were ready for modifications in the territory of the New City if peace negotiations were initiated. As for Haifa and Lydda, our position was: an international zone on conditions of mutuality and good-neighbourly relations. The presentation by M[oshe] S[hertok] was concise and included all the points of the proposal.

Following his remarks questions were asked on topics that had not been raised. They were: our attitude towards the Palestinian Arab government (Gaza),[5] and the effect of inter-Arab friction on the military situation. The first question is extremely sensitive, and the minister had raised it frequently in previous conversations. The reply was that we could not say anything definite now. The Arab area of Palestine had in effect become a purely geographical concept. There were no public figures there who could at present be considered candidates for government. The government in Gaza hated us passionately and we, for our part, could not under any circumstances agree to it. A statement of our clear opposition to that government might be construed to mean support for the annexation of the Arab section to Transjordan, but we could not say that either. In principle, our policy was for a separate [Arab] state in Palestine, but the circumstances were extremely complex. Our position required more clarification and that would be done in the course of the General Assembly. There would also be consultations with the Soviet representatives. As you see, no reply was given in this matter, but our interlocutor was given serious food for thought. The reply to the second question was that we lacked sufficient information on the depth of the split among the Arab forces, that of late we had been cut off from our sources of information on the Arab countries, and that the situation would become clearer to M[oshe] S[hertok] when he visited Paris. M[oshe] S[hertok] dwelt upon the prevailing differences between Egypt and England, the loss that could accrue to Egypt from the establishment of bases in the Negev, and the efforts being made by the British to reach a compromise on this issue with the Egyptians. I will note here that in the conversation we emphasized our vigorous opposition to the establishment of any sort of bases in the Negev. The minister also asked whether we knew anything about oil in the Negev. In the meantime you must have received the report on Eban's talks with the Soviet representatives in Paris.[6]

As to our relations with the Russians here, the minister has for the time being not continued paying calls on cabinet ministers. Until now he only visited Rokah, and even this not by our agency. I held a dinner party for the principal legation staff, except the minister. The atmosphere was good and friendly. They displayed an interest in various areas of life here, such as the

---

5. See Doc. 174 and notes.
6. At this meeting the Soviet representatives, Iakov Malik and Semen Tsarapkin, reiterated their firm support of the 29 November resolution and warned Eban against asking for any changes in the boundaries of either the Jewish or the Arab states (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. I, No. 537, p. 628).

workers' cooperatives, the educational system, and also asked about the decisions of the mediator, to which the same explanations noted above were given. It is interesting that they take a critical approach to cooperative enterprises (Mukhin); they doubt whether that form of organization can influence the economic structure in the cities, and they wonder whether the determining factor here is not the large sums of money that become available to those who join the cooperatives rather than the issue of labour. This may be the result of conversations they have held with various people here without us. In the same conversation we felt that they do not ascribe much value to our activity in the rural areas. The main thing, as they see it, is the form [of organization] in the cities and how industry and the working class develop there.

A strange incident occurred, for which we lack an adequate explanation. During the night of the day on which Bernadotte was assassinated,[7] someone sabotaged the car and generator of the Russian legation; the flag staff was broken and the flag itself disappeared. They summoned me in the middle of the night. Afterwards there was a similar incident with the car of the American legation.

We were glad to hear that you will be launching an effort to locate missing relatives, and we are sending you the first lists.[8] We shall continue to do so. What reactions is this arousing among the Jews in Russia and are many contacting you there?

Shalom and greetings,

S.F.

176
Sh. Friedman to M. Shertok (Paris)

ORIG.: ISA 93.03/64/15
Tel Aviv, 30 September 1948

To M. Shertok, Shalom and greetings,

I held an interesting conversation with Mukhin yesterday, a summary of which follows.

The conversation lasted more than an hour. It was opened by my interlocutor, who began with Erenburg's article.[1] They have already received

---

Doc. 175

7. See Doc. 169 and n.1 there.
8. There is no evidence that these lists were ever submitted to the Soviet authorities. For this matter see Ro'i, *The Struggle for Soviet Jewish Emigration*, p. 35.

Doc. 176

1. See Doc. 168.

the article and it is being passed from hand to hand. I told them that I had not yet read it and that we would continue the conversation after I had become acquainted with its contents.

He says there is nothing in the article that we should take amiss; on the contrary, there is much that is positive for us, and he does not understand why the telegraphic agency has to emphasize precisely the negative points – undoubtedly in order to try to aggravate the relations between the two countries. He seized on one of Erenburg's theses and reiterated it several times, namely: Israel will not be able to solve the Jewish problem even when there are three million Jews here, 'and we know that all the ten million will not come here'. It will be a weak state and the forces of darkness will be able to destroy it. The main thing is to fight everywhere against any possibility of domination by those forces.

I gave him a brief lesson in Zionism, enumerating various elements which make Zionism a necessity for the masses of our people. His reply was that he considers a basic element of our movement to be a negative factor: anti-semitism. 'After all, this is what both of us learned from Herzl.' However, that factor might disappear. It no longer exists in the Soviet Union and it will cease to exist in countries where democracy prevails.

I turned to the question of Russian Jewry, noting the various attempts made by the Soviet Union to resolve that question and their meagre results, and pointed to the antisemitism that still exists in many parts of the world and that also surged up on Soviet territory during the period of German occupation. He agreed with me that from the cultural standpoint the Jews in Russia had not attained what other peoples have, and he said that he now realizes that the Birobidzhan experiment was unsuccessful, noting that his Russian Jewish acquaintances were amazed when he asked them why they did not move there. I pointed out that it was impossible to build the State of Israel without *aliya* and without Zionism, that the Jews were a very weak element in the Diaspora and lacked the power to win the war against reaction in each and every country. I cited the example of the Jews of Germany. He agreed with me on various points, but returned to his main premise which he took from Erenburg: that the Jewish question would not be solved by Zionism. In the conversation we discussed also various aspects of our life here, which I will not go into now. The entire conversation was very lively and was conducted in a friendly manner.

Shalom.

Sh. Friedman

177
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – Ch. Weizmann (Rehovot, 5 October 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.3, L.32
Secret

I called on Weizmann at his invitation at his home at Rehovot. He expressed his 'gratitude to Soviet Russia for the help which it had given Israel', and then warned me that he did not want to talk about politics in his first conversation with me, but would put that off to a future date. The conversation was conducted on a formal level. Weizmann asked about the course of economic recovery in the USSR, told me about his visit to Russia before the revolution,[1] referred to the occasion when, during the Genoa Conference,[2] he was mistaken for Lenin, and described what life was like in England during the war. In this connection he remarked that 'no one seems to want war now, but people may talk too much, and then a war could flare up to save someone's honour'. However, he thought 'it was unlikely that there would be a war this year'. As he showed me his house and then its enormous garden, Weizmann said that there were a lot of gardens belonging to Arabs around Rehovot, and he 'still could not understand why these people had left their homes'. When immigrants arrived they would not be settled in this area, but mainly in the Negev; but if it depended on him, he would limit immigration to 70,000 a year, since the young state would not be able to 'digest' too great an influx of immigrants.

Weizmann invited me to come and see his research institute[3] and also to have dinner with him, promising he would let me know officially about this through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Weizmann's wife, the director of the Eastern Europe Division, Friedman, and the attaché Popov were present.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

1. Weizmann's last visit to Russia was in 1903 (see *Trial and Error* pp. 100–7).
2. The Genoa conference took place in April to May 1922 with the objective of settling postwar economic problems. Germany and Russia were represented; the conference broke down over the refusal of the Soviets to recognize Russia's pre-war debt.
3. Founded in 1936 as the Daniel Sieff Institute, it was greatly expanded and inaugurated as the Weizmann Institute of Science in 1949.

178
Y. Ratner to D. Ben-Gurion (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 6 October 1948

For Ben-Gurion from Ratner. I spoke for an hour and a half today with General of the Army Antonov, Vasilevskii's deputy. A conversation of this sort is definitely not usual for military attachés and I was requested not to tell other attachés that it had even taken place; therefore absolute secrecy is required.

The conversation dwelt on the course of the fighting, the Arab League armies, especially Iraq, national minorities in the Middle East, the character of our forces, commanders and equipment, the possibility of renewed fighting,[1] the importance of the Negev and Jerusalem. The question of their assisting us arose. We discussed: 1) training of commanders – both intensive and extensive; 2) arms supplies from German booty; 3) bases for shipping – air or maritime. According to procedure we now have to bring these questions to the Foreign Ministry here for its decision. In anticipation of such an inquiry in the next few days it is essential you cable us immediately types of equipment and quantities that we require from this source.[2]

Ratner

179
I.V. Polianskii to V. Molotov (Moscow)

COPY: GARF, F.6991, OP.3, D.54, LL.194–6
[Moscow] 6 October 1948
Secret

Council of Ministers of the USSR, to Comrade V.M. Molotov,

The Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults attached to the Council of Ministers[1] reports that the entire staff of the legation of the State of Israel, headed by the minister, Mrs. Meyerson, on 11 September, that is, a day after the minister presented her credentials, participated in the Sabbath prayer service at the Moscow Choral synagogue. On this occasion, at the request of the counsellor, Mr. Namir, the male legation members were called up to the

---

Doc. 178
1. Hostilities, in fact, resumed in the Negev on 15 October (see Doc. 201 and n. 4 there).
2. See Doc. 194.

Doc. 179
1. The Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults was established in 1944 and dealt with recognized religious denominations other than the Russian Orthodox Church.

reading of the Tora. The minister, Mrs. Meyerson, who sat during the entire service in the 'women's section' (in the balcony), as required by religious tradition, at the conclusion descended to the main hall, approached the rabbi, bowed ceremoniously to him, greeted him in Hebrew and burst into tears. When Meyerson and the people accompanying her passed through the crowd of congregants as they left the synagogue, many greeted her with applause.

On 27 September, the second secretary of the embassy, Mr. Lapid, appeared in the synagogue and gave the rabbi a letter from the Jewish community of Tel Aviv, which accompanied the Tora scroll brought by the legation as a gift for the Moscow synagogue. The legation would like to present the scroll to the synagogue in a festive ceremony; in this connection, Mr. Lapid asked the rabbi to set a date for the presentation and to prepare the ceremony.

Moreover, Mr. Lapid gave the rabbi Mrs. Meyerson's visiting card, her greetings for the New Year (4 October) and a package with 1500 rubles. At the same time, he gave the rabbi Mrs. Meyerson's invitation to visit her along with two or three members of the congregation for a personal conversation.

On 30 September, the first secretary of the legation, Mr. Levavi, called the rabbi in order to ask him to carry out the ritual check of the food and dishes (with regard to their being 'kosher') in the restaurant where the staff and legation workers eat.

On 4 October, the day of the religious holiday Rosh Hashana (New Year), Mrs. Meyerson, along with other legation members, again visited the synagogue. When she entered the synagogue, the large crowd, both inside the building and on the street as well, greeted her with applause, which Rabbi Shlifer tried to halt under the pretext that such forms of greeting have no place in a synagogue, which is a house of prayer.

Some people expressed dissatisfaction at this, declaring, 'We have waited 2000 years for this event, how can you forbid us to display our feelings.' It is estimated that there were up to 10,000 people in and around the synagogue on the morning of 4 October.[2]

The Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults gave the rabbi the following recommendations, having coordinated them with the USSR Foreign Ministry:

1. Without neglecting to carry out his rabbinic duties towards the legation employees, he should limit his contact with them to these [duties] and should not pursue any personal contacts.

2. He should respond to Mrs. Meyerson's greeting by sending her his visiting card in which, using a discreet text from the Tora, he should thank her for the gift.

3. He should decline the invitation to pay a personal visit to Mrs. Meyerson, at first using the excuse of the rabbi's recent serious illness, and later, he should delicately make it clear that from a religious point of view, a personal visit by the rabbi to his congregants was possible only in exceptional circumstances.

---

2. For more details of these events, see Docs. 160 and 180.

With regard to the legation's request to organize a ceremonial presentation of the Tora scroll, one must take into consideration that such a ceremony would inevitably turn into a demonstration with elements of political Zionism, all the more so because the letter accompanying the scroll has direct Zionist statements. Therefore the council considers it necessary to recommend that the rabbi accept the scroll in the presence of the synagogue executive organ alone, and that he send a letter in reply to Tel Aviv confirming that he received the Tora.

I request your instructions.[3]

Appendix: Copy of the letter from Tel Aviv.[4]

Chairman of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults
of the Council of Ministers of the USSR
Polianskii

180
G. Meyerson to W. Eytan (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 6 October 1948

To publish [but] not in the name of the legation: On Rosh Hashana we went to the Great Synagogue. Many thousands packed the building and the entire street during both days of the holiday. Our flag flew over the gate of the Metropole [Hotel]. Following details are not for publication in the press: As we arrived on the street we were greeted by thunderous cheers and cries in Hebrew: *heidad, shalom.* When we came out the huge crowd formed a spontaneous procession, which accompanied Golda and the other colleagues as far as the main street.[1]

Article accusing the English of Bernadotte's assassination[2] published in *Novoe vremia.*[3] Article by Itsik Fefer in *Eynikeyt* written in a somewhat more positive vein than Erenburg's article.[4]

Golda

Doc. 179

3. A handwritten note at the bottom of the sheet reads: 'for your information, on 7 October Comrade Podtserob telephoned that Comrade Molotov agrees with the concrete proposals made by the council, 7.10.48' [signature illegible] (see also Doc. 203).
4. The letter has not been traced.

Doc. 180

1. See Doc. 179.
2. See Doc. 169, n. 1.
3. Political weekly devoted to foreign affairs, published in Moscow in several languages.
4. Fefer's article appeared on 6 October 1948.

181
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sneh
(Tel Aviv, 9 October 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.3, LL.5–6
Secret

I saw Sneh at his request. He is one of the leaders of the United Mapam Workers' Party, having previously been in command of the Hagana. In conversation Sneh told me that he was leaving in a few days' time for the US as his party's delegate in order to establish closer relations with a certain progressive Zionist group in the US. This group has recently been linked to Wallace's Party[1] and supports his candidacy in the presidential elections. Sneh's task is to organize propaganda in the US, aiming to make the group work more actively in support of Wallace. Sneh, being a foreigner, cannot speak publicly for Wallace, but he will support him through the Zionist group. He thinks he will stay in the US until the presidential elections and may stop off in Paris on his way back.

I mentioned that I had read his article 'The Fateful Hour', published in the newspaper *Al hamishmar*,[2] in which Sneh warns the government and society about the dangers of concessions and any sort of deal on the Palestine question. I asked him what sort of danger he had in mind and how serious it was. Sneh answered that the main danger was that Britain and the US were always trying to draw Israel into their sphere of influence. With that in view, they were trying to detach the Negev from Israel in order to turn it into a military base. This question had been on their agenda during the entire thirty-year period of British rule in Palestine. All their proposals for the partition of Palestine have envisaged the separation of the Negev. This was evident in Lord Peel's plan in 1937[3] and in the Morrison-Grady proposal of 1946;[4] and, finally, the Americans insisted on it at the session of the General Assembly in 1947.

I asked whether the Americans and British were pursuing only strategic aims in the Negev, and Sneh said that there were important economic as well as strategic motives: 1) the Negev has oil reserves (in Gaza and the southern part of the Dead Sea around Kurnub;[5] 2) the Dead Sea has very rich reserves of potash, manganese and bromide. It was with this in mind that Churchill, as early as 1922, decided to divide the Dead Sea into two parts, so that the western part would be included in the mandatory territory of Palestine and the eastern part in Transjordan.

---

1. See Doc. 145, n. 2.
2. *Al hamishmar*, 1 Oct. 1948.
3. See Doc. 31, n. 3.
4. See Doc. 65.
5. Present-day Mamshit in the Negev Desert.

Israel's position at the UN Assembly in Paris was not to permit the detachment of the Negev, but Sneh did not trust the members of the Israeli delegation, into which they had had some difficulty in getting a single representative of Mapam – Liwszyc. He did not rule out possible concessions by the delegation. If the Americans were to insist that only the northern part of the Negev be annexed to Israel in compensation for some territory in Western Galilee, the government might well agree to this, which would mean the establishment of Anglo-American military bases in the Negev, and this, in turn, would mean that the State of Israel would lose its independence. It was not surprising, Sneh went on, that in his speech at the meeting of the Council of State on 28 September, Shertok had said only that the Negev was needed for new immigration and completely ignored the question of Israel's existence as an independent state if the Negev were turned into an Anglo-American military base. Moreover, the government could possibly make concessions in another direction. It was saying at present that the fate of the Arab part of Palestine 'does not concern the Jews'. Naturally, this position could lead to the annexation of all Arab Palestine to Transjordan, which would mean bringing the British back into Palestine.

There are other reasons why the Americans are interested in the Negev: 1) the possibility of digging a canal between Gaza and Aqaba, which could replace the Suez Canal; 2) the possibility of joining the Mediterranean with the Dead Sea by a canal, which, because of the difference in water level in these two seas, would open major opportunities for the electrification and irrigation of the entire Negev; 3) according to secret information (still unconfirmed in effect), there are deposits of uranium ore in the Aqaba area; 4) at the present time the British set great store by the defence of the Suez Canal from the east. All these factors suggest that the Negev is the key to the solution of the whole Palestine problem.

When I asked about the Israeli delegation's position on Jerusalem, Sneh said that, as was known, there is now a proposal to divide the city into three parts: Jewish, Arab and international, the last of which would include all the holy places. With the reservation that he was mentioning this in confidence, Sneh told me that at Shertok's meeting with Marshall the previous day, Marshall had proposed that the city be divided into two administrative districts, of which one would come under the trusteeship of Israel, and the other of Transjordan. An international commission would be appointed to look after the holy places.[5]

Speaking about his party's position, Sneh remarked that it did not know which would be worse – international trusteeship or partition. If the international trusteeship were exercised with the participation of the USSR, Mapam would support it. Sneh said that, in general, they were against partition, but

5. Shertok's meeting with Marshall took place on 5 October. It was brief and according to both US and Israeli sources, the Jerusalem issue was not discussed (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 2, No. 21, p. 47; *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. V, pp. 1452–3).

also against international trusteeship without the USSR. The party had major differences with the government on the question of Haifa and Lydda. Shertok had been saying in the State Council that, since Bernadotte's proposals concerned only the port and not the whole town of Haifa, Israel could agree with it. Mapam was saying that giving Transjordan the right to use the port of Haifa would, in practice, mean handing over the port to the British and turning it into a British naval base. The same was true of Lydda. That was why Mapam was insisting that there should be no concessions on this matter.

When I asked which parties or political groups were showing an inclination to give ground, Sneh answered that at present there were three currents of thought in political circles: 1) the right wing of the Mapai Party and the representatives of the *grande bourgeoisie*, whose views were expressed in the government by Finance Minister Kaplan and the Minister of Justice Rosenblueth, and in the press by the newspaper *Haaretz*: These were all inclined to make territorial concessions in order to gain the agreement and support of the US and Britain; 2) the extreme nationalists, revisionists and the IZL, secretly supported by Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, who oppose concessions and are trying to reach an agreement with the US to obtain the annexation of part of the Arab territories of Palestine in order to hand them over later as concessions to American capital. Ben-Gurion's view is expressed in the press by the journalist Liebenstein [Livneh] in the newspaper *Davar*. 'What Liebenstein writes, Ben-Gurion thinks, or the other way round' said Sneh; 3) the United Workers' Party and the Communist Party of Israel are against any sort of concessions to, or compromises with, the US and Britain, but in favour of 'a just compromise' with the Arabs, and of the closest possible relations with the USSR and the People's Democracies. The first and second of these groups frequently agree on their general line, but although they have eleven ministries out of thirteen in the government, their strength should not be exaggerated. This government has not been elected by anyone: basically it has usurped power and its ministers are usurpers. It is quite possible that when new elections are held, the 'balance among the parties' will change. The progressive movement in Israel is only just beginning. If the government goes for concessions over the Bernadotte Plan, this will strengthen the opposition parties, that is Mapam and the Israeli Communist Party, which are at present exerting a restraining influence on the government, and which cannot be disregarded. Of course what restrains the government more than anything else in its lurches towards the West is the Soviet Union, which pursues a consistent policy of support for Israel as an independent and sovereign state.

The conversation lasted about an hour. Second secretary Fedorin was present.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

182
Instructions of the Council of Ministers of the USSR

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.20, L.74
Moscow, 14 October 1948

INSTRUCTIONS, NO. 14926RS OF 14 OCTOBER 1948. MOSCOW, KREMLIN

The Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church attached to the Council of Ministers of the USSR is permitted to give its approval to the Moscow Patriarchate for the departure of Archimandrite Leonid (Il'ia Khristoforovich Lobachev) from the USSR to the State of Israel to work permanently as head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in the city of Jerusalem, and of Vladimir Evgen'evich Elkhovskii as the mission's priest.[1]

Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR
I. Stalin[2]

183
Meeting: V.S. Vasilenko – A. Levavi (Moscow, 14 October 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.20, LL.20–1
Secret

At his request I received the press attaché of the legation of the State of Israel, Levavi.

The press attaché came for a formal visit, and also to let the press department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs know that the legation was proposing to publish, as other embassies and legations do, a news bulletin in Russian. The bulletin will contain information on Israel. The attaché went on to say that they intended to distribute the bulletin to newspapers, the Sovinformburo, VOKS and other institutions.

I answered that the legation should apply about the matter in writing to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Levavi then said that the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs had also instructed the legation to distribute a journal in Russian in the USSR. The journal would be printed in Israel and sent to the USSR. Levavi then asked what organization handled the distribution of the periodical press.

I answered that Soiuzpechat[1] dealt with distribution of the periodical press.

Doc. 182

1. See Doc. 158.
2. Handwritten note at the bottom: 'Comrade Shchiborin, Please inform Comrade Ershov. Negotiate date of departure. 21.10, V. Zorin.'

Doc. 183

1. Soiuzpechat' — Russian acronym for the chief board for dissemination of printed materials subordinated to the Ministry of Communications of the USSR.

Levavi asked whether Soiuzpechat' would undertake the distribution of their journal in the same way as it distributed *America* and *British Ally* at its kiosks.

I answered that Soiuzpechat' was an independent economic organization, and I found it difficult to say whether it could meet the legation's request, i.e., to distribute the journal which it was proposed to publish.

Levavi concluded by saying that the legation would officially approach the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on these matters.

The conversation lasted 15 minutes.

V. Vasilenko

184
V.M. Molotov to I.V. Stalin (Moscow)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.06, OP.10, P.15, D.161, L.6
[Moscow] 19 October 1948

To Comrade Stalin,

On 14 October the representatives of China and Great Britain in the Security Council introduced a joint draft resolution in connection with the recent events in Palestine. This draft refers to the assassination of Bernadotte and to the fact that the Israeli government has not yet reported on the progress of the investigation of this murder, and then it proposes that the government and other authorities in Palestine allow free access for persons charged with monitoring adherence to the cease-fire to all places where they must go in order to fulfil their duties, and take all necessary measures to ensure the safety of the cease-fire observers and the mediator's representatives.

In his telegram No. 388, Vyshinskii proposes that we should not object to this draft, but vote in favour. According to Vyshinskii, the Jews' only complaint is that there are more UN observers on their territory (54 in number) than on Arab territory (32). In this connection Vyshinskii proposes to introduce an amendment to the resolution pointing out the desirability of an even distribution of UN observers between the territories of each side.

Seeing that at the time we did not object to the formation of the cease-fire commission, and insisted on the participation of Soviet representatives as observers, I think that we can accept Vyshinskii's proposals.[1]

Please confirm.

V. Molotov

---

1. The resolution was passed unanimously on 19 October. The Soviet amendment reads as follows: 'Remind the mediator of the desirability of an equitable distribution of the United Nations observers for the purpose of observing the truce on the territories of both parties.' For the full text of this resolution, see *SC OR, Third Year, Resolutions and Decisions*, pp. 26–7.

185
V.M. Molotov to I.V. Stalin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.06, OP.10, P.15, LL.161–4
Moscow, 20 October 1948

The First Committee of the General Assembly is beginning to discuss Bernadotte's proposals for Palestine, which amount to the following:[1]

1. Bernadotte proposes to replace the existing cease-fire between the two sides with an official peace, or a cease-fire such as would involve the complete withdrawal and demobilization of the armed forces, or the creation of a demilitarized zone under UN observation.

I find Bernadotte's proposal unacceptable, since it says nothing about the withdrawal of foreign troops (Transjordan and Egypt) and proposes that troops be demobilized in the Jewish and Arab parts of Palestine.

Vyshinskii suggests that we counter this proposal with our own, elaborated in the directives [to the Soviet delegation], for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops and foreign military personnel from the territory of the Jewish and Arab states in Palestine.[2]

I suggest that we agree with Vyshinskii and give him supplementary instructions to support the proposal for an official peace between the Arab and Jewish states, the creation of which was envisaged by the General Assembly's resolution of 29 November.

2. Bernadotte proposes that the Negev be handed over to the Arabs and Western Galilee to the Jews, while the Arab states should decide the fate of the Arab part of Palestine. In this connection the arguments in favour of the annexation of the Arab part of Palestine to Transjordan should be borne in mind.

Vyshinskii thinks that we must object to these proposals, since they alter the General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947 by giving four-fifths of the whole territory of Israel (the Negev) to Transjordan, i.e., into British control, and that we should insist on the implementation of the General Assembly's resolution.

I propose that we agree with Vyshinskii.

3. Bernadotte proposes that the UN give an assurance that the borders between the Arab and Jewish territories would be respected, and could be changed only with the agreement of the interested parties.

Vyshinskii thinks that we need not raise any objection to this proposal if the borders established by the General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947 remain unchanged.

---

1. Bernadotte completed his report on 16 September 1948, and it was put on the agenda of the UN General Assembly convened on 20 September 1948. The Assembly turned the report over to the First (Political) Committee, which then decided to open the discussion on 20 October 1948.
2. See Doc. 117.

I propose that we agree with Vyshinskii.

4. Bernadotte proposes that the port of Haifa, including the oil refineries and the pipeline terminals, be declared a free port and the airport at Lydda be declared a free airport, with unimpeded access to both ports for any interested Arab countries.

Vyshinskii reports that the Jews are showing some inclination to agree on Haifa with interested Arab states on a reciprocal basis.

I propose that we instruct Vyshinskii that if the Jews and Arabs agree on mutual concessions regarding Haifa and Lydda, we should not object.

5. Bernadotte proposes that the city of Jerusalem, in the boundaries defined by the General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947, be the subject of a special resolution, and be put under practical control of the UN, with the maximum practicable local autonomy for the Jewish and Arab communities, and with unimpeded access to the city by road, air and rail.

Vyshinskii proposes that the part of the new city of Jerusalem which is inhabited by Jews be included in the Jewish state, and the part inhabited by Arabs in the Arab state, and that we agree with the proposal of the Jews to limit the establishment of an international regime under UN to the area of the Old City.

In contrast with Vyshinskii's proposal, I suggest that we give him the following instructions: to insist on the implementation of the General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947, that is, to set up in Jerusalem a regime under which administrative power is exercised by the Trusteeship Council. If this is done, we can agree to Bernadotte's proposal to give local autonomy to the Jewish and Arab segments of the population of Jerusalem.

If, in the course of discussion of this matter, some solution acceptable both to Jews and to Arabs is contemplated, we consider it possible to discuss such a proposal in due course.

6. Bernadotte proposes that the Arab refugees be given the right to return to the territory of the Jewish state and to compensation for lost property.

Vyshinskii proposes that the Jews be given the opportunity to come to an agreement with the Arabs on this matter in the course of peace negotiations.

I propose that we agree with Vyshinskii.

7. Bernadotte proposes the establishment of a Palestine Conciliation Commission, responsible to the UN and acting on UN instructions.

Vyshinskii proposes that we not oppose the creation of such a commission, provided that it has purely advisory and consultative functions.

I propose that we agree with Vyshinskii on condition that at least one member of the Conciliation Commission comes from an East European state friendly to us. If the commission includes the US and Britain, we must make sure that the USSR is also a member.

8. In addition, Vyshinskii reports that the Jews intend to put forward a proposal that they be given a 'corridor' to connect Jerusalem with the main coastal area of the Jewish state.

Vyshinskii proposes that we not object to this proposal by the Jews if other delegations come out in favour of it and it has some chance of being accepted.

I propose that we agree with Vyshinskii.

Please confirm the above proposals.[3]

V. Molotov

186
P.I. Ershov to V.A. Zorin (Moscow)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.21, LL.7–8
Tel Aviv, 20 October 1948
Secret

To: Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Comrade V. A. Zorin,

In Israel there is a League for Friendship with the USSR, which was created in 1946 on the basis of the existing V League for Aid to the Soviet Union. According to the program of the league, its main goal is to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the Soviet Union and Palestine. The league is run by its central committee, which is formed on the principle of party representation. As a result, the work of the league is hampered by disagreements among parties that is reflected there. Arguments about who is going to manage a certain event, or who is going to read a report at a certain ceremonial meeting, etc., take place constantly. This principle [of representation] made it possible for right-wing elements, i.e., the Mapai Party, to take on a leading role in the league. Some members of the United Workers' Party, e.g., Tarnopoler, the secretary-general of the league, found themselves under the influence of the Mapai representatives and essentially were forced to pursue their policy, which is manifestly demagogic.

The league has several branches in the main cities and in some rural settlements. And for the same reasons there are disagreements between the central committee of the league, on the one hand, and the local committees in Tel Aviv and Haifa, on the other.

The work of the league was always limited to high-profile activity, such as meetings and rallies. At present, however, the league has mapped out some practical measures: it plans to call a congress of the league, to re-elect its central committee, to approve a new league charter, etc. The publication of books and organization of an exhibition about the Soviet Union are planned.

With the arrival of the Soviet legation in Israel, the sympathy of the country's population towards the USSR increased greatly. It gives us ample

3. Handwritten note at the top of the document: 'Comrade Stalin agrees, V.M. Molotov, 20.10'.

opportunity to conduct our propaganda and to arrange various cultural events in spite of a certain resistance on the part of reactionary elements. With the present league leadership, however, it is unlikely that we can achieve satisfactory results in this respect. Therefore, we should define our attitude towards the league and its future work. First, we could decide to change its leadership. Naturally this would require a certain amount of pressure, direct or indirect, during the re-election of the league's central committee. Second, we could create a new Society for Cultural Relations between Israel and the USSR; still, we cannot rule out the possibility that Israeli parties might organize a boycott of this society, and this might mean that we could not make it a mass organization.

I request your instructions.[1]

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

Enclosure: Information about the League for Friendship with the USSR, compiled by second secretary of the legation, Comrade Fedorin.[2]

187
Meeting: A.P. Vlasov – M. Namir (Moscow, 21 October 1948)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.2, LL.17–19
Secret

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MEETING WITH NAMIR, COUNSELLOR OF THE ISRAELI LEGATION IN MOSCOW

With the permission of Comrade Gusev, I received Namir at the latter's request. Namir said that he came to make my acquaintance and at the same time to solve some problems he had. He speaks Russian fluently, and when I asked where he had studied Russian, Namir said that he had been born in the Ukraine and had left for Palestine some 25–27 years ago. Before the Second

1. Apparently Zorin recommended consulting VOKS, for on 30 November 1948 the director of the Middle East Department, Bakulin, sent a letter to the Chairman of VOKS, A. I. Denisov. In a reply dated 6 December 1948, member of the VOKS administration L.D. Kislova suggested 'recommending that the VOKS representative [in Israel] carry out reorganization of the League of Friendly Relations with the USSR and its membership not on the principle of party affiliation but on the principle of a society which brings together prominent figures of Israeli culture' (see AVP RF, f.089, op.1, p.2, d.22, l.26).
2. The following notes are appended: 'Comrade Bakulin, clarify and make suggestions, V. Zorin, 27.10'; 'Comrade Shchiborin, please discuss, I. Bakulin, 28.10'.

World War his parents lived in Kherson, but they had been killed during the German occupation.

1. Namir told me that in the Bukovina and Bessarabia region there were a certain number of Israeli citizens who had come to visit their relatives.[1] Owing to military activity they had been unable to return to their homeland and now they were asking the Israeli legation to help them return. Namir said that the government of the State of Israel had no objection to their return. Namir asked us to assist these citizens in their departure and promised to send an official request about this later.

I told Namir that as soon as the request was received, it would be passed on to the administration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

2. Namir brought a newspaper published in Tel Aviv, where the Soviet legation's announcement about the registration of Soviet citizens was printed. In view of the fact that there are apparently a certain number of citizens of the State of Israel in the Soviet Union, Namir asked for advice on how to contact them.

I told Namir that all the Soviet newspapers and the radio had announced the establishment of diplomatic relations between the USSR and the State of Israel and the arrival of the legation in the Soviet Union. All Israeli citizens must know about this, and in my view, there was no need to publish a special announcement.

3. Namir informed me that Comrade Shchiborin had given him a list of refugees from Germany and Poland who were Israeli citizens, amounting to 73 persons, who were at present in Harbin and had asked for permission to enter Israel.[2] The government of the State of Israel agreed to the entry of those people. Namir asked for assistance in giving them transit visas across the Soviet Union because sea travel from Harbin was impossible as the Suez Canal was closed by the Egyptians, and the British did not allow passage through the Straits of Gibraltar. From the Soviet Union the refugees could travel to Israel either by boat from Odessa or through Czechoslovakia, which has a regular air link with the State of Israel. They will send an official request later. I promised to pass this request to the administration of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

4. Namir said that the legation had information from Tel Aviv that some Israeli citizens had solitary next of kin (such as elderly fathers or mothers) in the Soviet Union whom they would like to have join them in Israel. Namir asked whether the legation could count on the assistance of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs in sending such people to Israel. All the necessary expenses incurred by their move from the USSR to Israel would be borne by their relatives in Israel, and in some cases the Israeli government would render assistance.

---

1. Reference is to residents of Palestine, former subjects of the British Empire, who had arrived in these areas before World War II and before their annexation by the Soviet Union.
2. See Doc. 171.

I replied that the question of the departure of Soviet citizens from the USSR to join their relatives in Israel depended on their will and their consent. In cases in which there was consent, they were obliged to bring the question of their departure for Israel to the attention of the local militia at their place of residence.

The conversation lasted 40 minutes.[3]

Director of the Consulate Board
A. Vlasov

188
Excerpts from M. Shertok's Report to the Provisional Government of Israel[1] (Tel Aviv, 26 October 1948)

STENOGRAPHIC REPORT: ISA J1/3445

[...]

The Eastern bloc supports us staunchly. There were talks on numerous aspects of the problem and with some of the Soviet Union's satellite states. They showed an interest in domestic issues, asking about the country's character and what the situation would be following the elections. None of these matters affects by one iota their political stand at the UN, and there is no sign of an adverse shift. I would say the opposite: the Soviet Union firmly supports our cause. None of the rumours that has circulated in Israel have any foundation. It has become clear to me, as I hoped it would, that there is no basis for that 'expertise' which decrees *a priori* what can and what can not be explained to the Soviet Union, and which is so blatant in some part of the press: the 29th of November is a fact which cannot be changed; our policy on the refugees will not be acceptable; the Soviet Union is committed to internationalizing Jerusalem – we can request its participation in this issue but we must not challenge [the idea of an] internationalized Jerusalem. That view, which was taken by some newspapers, was refuted by the conversations

---

Doc. 187

3. Namir later had two meetings with officials of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the subject of the Harbin refugees — on 10 November 1948 and on 24 January 1949 (see AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.3, d.5, l.3).

Doc. 188

1. Shertok made this report after attending the UN General Assembly session in Paris.

we had. True, some issues had to be explained, but we encountered no dogmatism. We encountered considered judgement, which we had to try to persuade, but we encountered no insurmountable obstacles.

In our first meeting David Liwszyc participated, and on their side – Vyshinskii and Malik. Following my opening presentation (for Vyshinskii this was the first direct meeting with a Zionist and first direct experience with the Palestine question), I saw that he knew something about the subject, though he himself claimed to know little. All the 'heresies' were raised in this meeting: the Jaffa issue, the road to Jerusalem, Jerusalem itself, western Galilee, etc. The importance of the Negev was explained. Vyshinskii turned to Malik and said: Justice is on their side. The fact that he addressed Malik was typical. He did not address me, but Malik, and that is a sign that there was a difference of opinion between them. Malik undoubtedly raised the argument of 29 November. Subsequently Vyshinskii said: Justice is on their side – in everything. Afterwards he turned to me and said: Nevertheless, there is one consideration. There is the question of the 29 November resolution. We have to consider by how much that resolution will be undermined. There is good reason to stand behind that resolution and not touch it, because if we add to it, someone else may detract from it. I noted that there was also the course of reality; true, that was the resolution and it was the foundation and the point of departure, but there was a constantly changing reality, and the 29 November resolution was based on a particular set of circumstances. In one of the conversations I said about the border of the Galilee that it was a very plunging '*décolleté*'. It is clear that this border must be defended, but in its current state it is impossible to defend, and the line has to be righted. Vyshinskii said that Galilee was not a problem, it could be worked out. The problem was Jerusalem. On that issue there had been a considerable deviation. I said that we were not deviating, the principle was preserved regarding the Old City. In effect, the city was international because of its sanctity, and the sacred part was the Old City. I made myself clear: We would not rely on any international army. I said that I did not know what the prospects were that the Russians would be part of that army, but we would not rely on it even if they participated. We did not know where the world was headed, we did not know what shocks were in store, and we did not know what stand would be adopted by the armies, some units of which would be in Jerusalem, what international authority they would hold, and whether they would want to fight or not. We would not be able to rely on them, and the 100,000 Jews of Jerusalem would not hand over their arms, and who would disarm them now?

I informed him about the American proposal.[2] I discerned that he found it acceptable. He had not known of it. Hardly any of those whom I told of it had

2. The Americans suggested dividing the city between Israel and Transjordan, each side to establish a trusteeship regime in its sector. The UN would be responsible for the holy places, but without an actual UN administration in the city (see Eban to Eytan, 1 October 1948, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 3–4).

known about it,[3] neither Schuman nor the UN personnel. He asked a question that revealed what interested the Russians: In other words, would New Jerusalem also be subordinated to the Trusteeship Council? I said, yes. I saw that he was satisfied with my reply. I said: Most certainly! If this provided a solution – let it be.

Generally, our relations with the Soviet Union are very good, as they were before. The Russians want to know our position in detail. I sat twice with Tsarapkin, and he wanted to know our position on every point. He is the toughest of them all. He was very perturbed by the issue of 29 November and the danger that a deviation from it would undermine our position. But in a conversation with Liwszyc afterwards, he said that we were right and that the 29 November resolution needed to be amended. (Liwszyc is a member of Mapam, who in the division of duties, was given charge of handling relations with the Russians. He has good command of French and Russian. In the meeting with Vyshinskii a sensitive point came up. Liwszyc is from Kiev and so is Vyshinskii. When Vyshinskii asked Liwszyc when he had come to Israel, he dealt with the question gracefully – saying that he had arrived not too many years ago.[4] When I was asked about my arrival here, I replied that I had been here for 43 years and that generated no further questions.)

In the Security Council the Russians are operating not just as our allies, but as our emissaries. They undertake every mission. In that session in which Malik obtained an amendment of the resolution for us, [namely] that the give-and-take must be equal for Israel and the neighbouring states, and a second amendment – that no ruling can be issued until both sides have been heard (we had complained that a ruling had been issued without hearing us) – in that same session he prevented the adoption of a resolution which would force us to withdraw to our previous positions in the Negev. Mr. Eban was very effective in this instance. Malik was very adamant on this issue. He stressed that a cease-fire was obligatory and thus paid lip service to the Security Council. He said that the shooting must stop, but without returning to [the previous] positions, and added that there was no need for a resolution. He said he was not familiar with the roads and did not know where a convoy could pass – that required clarification – but it should not have postponed a decision of principle on a cease-fire. He emphasized this in order to shunt aside other matters. Mr. Eban argued: What does it mean – to return to the previous positions? Why did the war break out? – The situation had become intolerable. It is the present situation that ensures peace and stability. Now we have a snag with Bunche on this issue. In the same session Eban asked whether he understood correctly that the decision was not on withdrawing the army to the

3. Cf. Doc. 181 and n. 5 there.
4. Liwszyc arrived in Palestine from Poland in 1939.

previous positions, but on a cease-fire. The president said that he had already stated three times that no decision was being made calling for the withdrawal of the army to the former positions.[5]

[...]

Russia and its satellites have six votes. That is an *a priori* minority. Malik apologized for not succeeding in removing the thorn (the Bernadotte issue) from the resolutions. I told him that it was a small matter, he had helped us greatly, and not everything could be accomplished.

I had an interesting conversation with Manuil'skii. It was our first meeting. He is very alert, vital, forthcoming and flexible. He is a Ukrainian, not young, over sixty, but full of vim and vigour. He is the foreign minister of the Ukraine. He asked a great many questions and finally, all of a sudden, threw me a question in the course of the clarification: What is the government of Gaza?[6] I do not think there is any basis for saying that they are necessarily ready to recognize the Arab National Committee as the government of Gaza. He asked about the composition of the government of Gaza. I told him which elements were not part of that government. I told him that the communists did not join the government, and he said that of course they have no place within such a group. I told him how weak the party was, that there was no Arab labour movement. This was after the conversation between Liwszyc and Malik, in which they had discussed prospects, and Liwszyc had tried to argue that there were progressive elements in Egypt, an intelligentsia and an oppressed class. Malik said that nothing would come of them, they were not the ruling forces and they could not be taken into account. When I mentioned the Arab Communist Party and noted that it was not strong, Manuil'skii asked a bit mischievously: And do you have a communist party? I said there was a small party, very weak, and meagre. I said that there were reasons for this, and that the party needed not remain in its present situation. I said that throughout our entire heroic period they had taken no part in the major enterprises and that they had always been swimming upstream: they had opposed *aliya*, settlement and building a socialist economy from the bottom up. They had taken no part in the Hagana and therefore had repelled the working class and the youth. When I mentioned the youth he said: Your young people are wonderful. How they fight! I take my hat off to them. He said: Your moral and political status is at its height. He made this comment both in relation to the Negev and to the earlier victories.

[...]

---

5. Reference is to the Security Council's discussion of 19 October, concerning the situation in the Negev where fighting had resumed on 15 October (see Doc. 201, n. 4). In the final vote, the Soviet Union (and the Ukraine) abstained on the operational clauses of the resolution calling on both parties to withdraw to previous positions (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 2, Companion Volume, Editorial Note, pp. 118–19).
6. See Doc. 174, and n. 9 there.

189
Transcript of a Conversation between E.M. Podvigin and A. Levavi

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.2, L.26
Moscow, 27 October 1948
Secret

TRANSCRIPT OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH THE FIRST SECRETARY OF THE LEGATION OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL LEVAVI

Today, 26 October 1948, Levavi telephoned to ask about the Soviet government's reply to the Swiss legation on the application of the State of Israel to join the Universal Postal Convention, signed in Paris on 5 June 1947.[1]

On instructions from Comrade Bakulin, I told Levavi that the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs had informed the Swiss legation that the governments of the Soviet Union and the Ukrainian SSR and Belorussian SSR had no objection to Israel joining the said convention. Levavi thanked me for this information.[2]

Second Secretary
Podvigin

190
M. Men'shikov to V.M. Molotov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.14, L.3
Moscow, 30 October 1948
Secret

To Comrade V.M. Molotov,

The trade attaché of the State of Israel, Mr. Bejerano, who has arrived in Moscow, is holding talks with associations[1] of the Ministry of Foreign Trade about purchasing various commodities, mainly, grain, crude oil, fertilizers, asbestos, caustic soda and paper. So far only one deal has been agreed upon with Israel for 10,000 tons of petrol and 3,000 tons of kerosene.

Doc. 189

1. The Paris Congress of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) ruled that applications for membership must be sent to the Swiss government. To become a UPU member, the candidate country had to receive the support of at least two-thirds of the full membership.
2. Israel did not receive the required number of votes for UPU membership in 1948. It was admitted to the union in 1950.

Doc. 190

1. In the USSR the state had a monopoly on foreign trade, and export–import operations were carried out by state-owned firms called foreign trade associations.

In our conversation during his courtesy call, Mr. Bejerano expressed the hope that his talks with the associations would result in other viable deals, and that this would promote the conclusion of a permanent trade agreement between the USSR and Israel.

At this point Mr. Bejerano asked whether he could count on a favourable attitude of the Soviet side towards such an agreement.[2]

I replied that this question would be given appropriate consideration.

I request your instructions on the position to be adopted by the Ministry of Foreign Trade towards Mr. Bejerano's question about a permanent trade agreement with the State of Israel.[3]

Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade of the USSR
M. Men'shikov

191
I.N. Bakulin to Iu.M. Kaganovich (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, D.2, D.22, L.16
Moscow, 4 November 1948
Secret

To the Chairman of the Board of the All-Union Agency Mezhdunarodnaia kniga,[1] Comrade Iu.M. Kaganovich,

According to a report from the minister of the Soviet legation in Israel, Comrade Ershov, the bookstores of Tel Aviv and other Israeli cities are full of books, journals, magazines, and other literature hostile to us.[2] At the same time

---

Doc. 190

2. In a letter to Shertok, dated 15 November 1948, Bejerano wrote: 'My main work is with the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Trade. I have visited most of the more important departments, have already established friendly relations with some of them as far as this is possible here. I must say that I have been helped considerably by the very attitude of the Soviet government toward us. It is obvious to me that they are prepared to enter into regular trade exchanges with us — and I am confident that as soon as our people at home become more used to thinking eastwards and not always westwards in commercial matters, the commercial relations which you desired with the USSR will be established. I am pleased to inform you that all the heads of departments I have met until now speak a commercial language I can easily understand: they are business people in the best sense of the word and display a very friendly attitude toward our young state' (ISA 130.02/2389/29).
3. At the top of the document the following note is typed: 'Comrade Men'shikov. What is the opinion of the Ministry of Foreign Trade? 1.11, Molotov.' Within a week Men'shikov replied that if the Israeli side would resume its proposals on the trade agreement, the USSR representative would react favourably and ask for concrete Israeli offers. According to Men'shikov, Soviet trade with Israel would be limited to sales of wheat and petroleum. At the top of the letter is a typed note: '[Consult] with Comrade Zorin. 8.11, Molotov' (AVP RF, f.089, op.1, p.2, d.14, l.2).

Doc. 191

1. Mezhdunarodnaia kniga was a Soviet agency dealing in the export and distribution of books outside the Soviet Union.
2. Ershov's report filed in AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.2, d.13, l.2.

a very limited number of Soviet books, magazines, and newspapers can be found on sale, though the recognition of the State of Israel by the Soviet Union and the arrival of our legation in Tel Aviv have created a favourable atmosphere in the country for a much wider distribution of our literature.[3]

In view of this, please let us know whether Mezhdunarodnaia kniga has its agents in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and other Israeli cities, and also give us your opinion whether we should be more active in sending Soviet literature for distribution in Israel.[4]

Head of the Near and Middle East Department
USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs
I. Bakulin

192
D. Ben-Gurion to I.V. Stalin (Moscow)

TEL: ISA 130.15/2513/15
[Tel Aviv] 4 November 1948

Please transmit the following telegram to Generalissimo Stalin, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Kremlin:

In the name of the State of Israel and in my own name I am pleased to offer best wishes on the occasion of the anniversary of the October Revolution, which guaranteed national equality to the peoples of the USSR, secured employment and a means of existence for all its workers, opened the path to social and spiritual progress for the urban and rural masses and gave birth to the powerful Red Army which achieved an immense feat in the war against the fascist Nazi threat. Our people will never forget the assistance rendered by the USSR to the Jewish victims of Nazism, nor the loyal support to Israel in its struggle for liberty and independence in its historic homeland. I wish the people of your country fulfillment, reconstruction in the wake of the war, economic progress, peace and international understanding.

Ben-Gurion
President of the Provisional Government of Israel

---

3. On 12 November 1948, Bakulin sent a complementary letter to Kaganovich, mentioning that Ershov, had proposed opening bookstores in Tel Aviv and Haifa for the sale of Soviet books (see AVP RF, f.089, op.1, p.2, d.22, l.18).
4. In a reply dated 17 November 1948, Mezhdunarodnaia kniga noted that its traditional contacts with Palestine had been interrupted from May to August 1948 due to lack of postal communications, and that they had been resumed in September 1948. The firm endorsed Ershov's proposals and intended to negotiate with Israeli firms (see AVP RF, f.089, op.1, p.2, d.22, l.21).

193
M. Shertok to G. Meyerson (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/3
[Tel Aviv] 5 November 1948

Comments regarding our situation at the [UN General] Assembly:

(1) The Bernadotte report was drawn up in conjunction with Britain and the United States to attain an agreement between them. The representatives of the British Office in Cairo and the State Department consulted secretly with Bernadotte and Bunche at Rhodes.[1]

(2) The main intention of Britain in cutting off the entire Negev is to create a land bridge from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf, from the Gaza Strip to Basra – a continuous area of British influence, half Jordanian and half Iraqi – as a substitute for the defence system it has evacuated and as a *cordon sanitaire* against the East. Bases to control the Suez Canal and sources of oil are of lesser import. It is possible that they are also contemplating a canal from Gaza to Eilat as an alternative to the Suez Canal to free them from dependence on a hostile Egypt.

(3) In order to attain what is most important to them, Britain is prepared to compensate Egypt by conceding territory in the southern Negev, so long as its northern part together with Gaza goes to Transjordan. In any event, its plan is to divide the Negev between Transjordan and Egypt.

(4) America is party to the aspiration for a continuous bridge as a base for the West against the East, but is not insistent on Gaza and is prepared to compromise with us, perhaps along the 31st parallel, so long as we are prepared to give up the southern Negev in order to pressure Arab territorial continuity and to leave an area for air fields which will help in the defence of Persian oil.

(5) We did not acquiesce to American enticements to enter into negotiations on a compromise regarding the Negev. Our insistence upon the entire Negev is unflinching, for its own sake and as a tactical move towards Russia, so that if in the end it is resolved to sever a part of the Negev, the decision will be taken against our will and not as a compromise with us. Our arguments are: first, [it is] an area for settlement; second, the Dead Sea; third, Eilat as a natural harbor for Dead Sea products, based on the railway concession held by the potash works; fourth, Eilat as Israel's gateway to the eastern seas.

---

1. Reference is presumably to the joint visit of Sir John Troutbeck, head of the British Middle East Office in Cairo, and Robert McClintock, of the US Department of State to Rhodes in September 1948, when they conferred with Bernadotte with regard to his forthcoming report to the UN General Assembly. According to information in the possession of Israeli officials, Troutbeck and McClintock took an active part in the preparation of the first part of the initial draft of the Bernadotte report, convincing Bernadotte to move Israel's border in the Negev from the 31st parallel to the Majdal–Faluja (or Negba–Gat) line laying further to the north (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 2, No. 21 and n. 7 there).

(6) In opening our campaign for the Negev in Paris our position was weak, even in the north, as a result of the Egyptian noose around our neck; this was the basis for the mediator establishing the Negba–Gat line as our southern border, which for the English was a *sine qua non.* Given this situation, our supporting pillar, in addition to the 25 settlements, was the resolution of 29 November. From this standpoint [our] victory confirmed a decisive adjustment regarding the northern Negev. But it is precisely this adjustment that emphasized our lack of a hold on the empty triangle[2] and Eilat. It is thus my opinion that we must must make every effort to gain a foothold in Eilat and set up intermediate stations. A difficult but viable task. Uprooting us by force is infinitely more severe than misrepresenting the Assembly resolution [of 29 November].

(7) Our strength in the Galilee is our physical control there which has now been fully realized. As regards the Galilee, the Russians in Paris, some with, some without any argument as to the danger of undermining 29 November, accepted our position even before our last victory. They agreed that a lesson should be learned from the experience gained since then and that the border of the 29th [November] be amended. Vyshinskii stated explicitly: The Galilee is not a problem. Tsarapkin claimed that no space remained for an Arab state; my reply to that was that even if a separate Arab state were established we would be prepared to negotiate on a border settlement, but that we were not in control of the situation unless we conquered all of Palestine, and so we could not ignore the possibility of the annexation of the remainder to Transjordan, which would give the Arabs a tremendous expanse of land.

(8) In Jerusalem, as in the northern Negev, the Americans have proved relatively flexible as regards the mediator's report, suggesting to us privately to consider Israeli trusteeship in the Jewish sector and Arab trusteeship in the Arab sector, including the Old City. Their argumentation: the impracticability of an international military force and Jerusalem's lack of a financial basis in the absence of an economic union. Trusteeship for both sides is a synthesis between an international authority and the need for definitive rule for those interested in it. We did not give our consent, but we manifested positive interest, except as regards to the Old City, which we objected vehemently to surrendering to an Arab state in trusteeship, and demanded that it come under direct UN rule. We passed on the idea to the Russians, the French, the Australians and others. Vyshinskii saw in an Israeli Jerusalem the most serious deviation from 29 November; I am convinced he would have compromised begrudgingly and make do with preserving the principle [of internationalization] in the Old City, but when he heard the American proposal he was relieved, for it maintained the authority of the Trusteeship Council, of which Russia is a member, regarding the entire city. Schuman and Evatt were pleased with our proposal regarding the Old City which ensures a Christian governor

2. Reference is to the southern part of the Negev, which was devoid of Jewish settlers.

within the walls, and thus, expressed their preparedness to agree to Israeli trusteeship in the New City. The Russians also appreciated the advantage of direct UN rule over the Old City, and did not object to Arab trusteeship over part of the New City. In all our discussions we stressed the necessity to link Jewish Jerusalem to the [Jewish] state. Regarding defence, I argued that even if an international force were practical we could not rely upon it in light of experience and because of the uncertainties of the global situation. And we would not abandon the security of 100,000 Jews and the fate of our people in Jerusalem to the negative geopolitical situation which we face.

(9) In sum: Given that there is no chance of a two-thirds majority for the 29 [Nov.] borders with all the adjustments; that, second, all the adjustments are already in our hands; and that third, the main offensive against us is in the Negev, where we are protected by 29 November; it is not in our interest that the issue of our borders be determined at the Assembly and our task is to prevent and not to put through a resolution. Up to the time of our recent victories there was no chance of a two-thirds majority for the boundaries stipulated in the mediator's report. Following our victory, there is in theory room for apprehension that the Arabs, to prevent further defeat, will cling to the report as a last resort and will vote for it, and then the reckoning will change. Even so, we must rely on the forcefulness of the argument that we are not be ejected by force, and thus the danger of a decision to tear away the entire Negev is indeed remote. This will not be the situation if the line of compromise prevails and it comes to a vote, for then there is the fear of a majority for compromise, especially if we are not in Eilat.

(10) On the positive side, we are aiming for a resolution endorsing Israel's existence and demanding an end to the invasion, termination of the war and peace negotiations. Since we will not be able to escape a [UN Conciliation] Commission – and in any case an international commission is preferable to a single mediator – we are aiming at expanding its composition and restricting its authority, so that it will be a commission of 'good offices' only and will not intervene in the course of events, nor determine them, but at the most, if there is no agreement, will bring its recommendations to the next Assembly. It is better for us to leave concrete decisions to the negotiations, if they are held, or to create a de facto situation if they are not held. It would be preferable for the question of Jerusalem – with the complexities of the trusteeship issue to be deliberated in a commission and not in the Assembly.

(11) As for negotiations [with the Arabs], our declared attitude is that we prefer a separate Arab state, but our conquests, which certainly have not ended, are reducing its territory and increasing its population, two factors in favour of annexation to Transjordan, apart from other factors operating in this direction, such as the political futility of the remaining part and the danger of the mufti. It is possible, therefore, that the annexation of the remainder to Transjordan is inevitable. But we are not hastening to take the initiative in negotiations, so as not to lose out in the bargaining with the king, and out of sensitivity towards the Russian position.

(12) Another candidate for negotiations is Egypt. A member of the royal court contacted us in Paris and initiated unofficial and non-committal talks.[3] For them the main thing is the annexation of Gaza and other areas in the Negev. In reply to their question as to whether we would be prepared to divide the Negev between us and them, we stated that we did not mind if they were to take the desert area of the Arab Negev, which runs along the Egyptian border, and which we had agreed to concede at Lake Success, but not Gaza, which is the only outlet of Arab Palestine to the sea. What is not clear is the determinant basis of Egyptian policy. their opposition to us or to a British base in the Negev The answer to this question is the key to what Egypt will prefer, compromise with us or with Britain and Transjordan. The issues are complex and amorphous and we are still feeling our way.

(13) The clear impression is that the Russians have a realistic attitude towards these matters. Their attitude towards us is determined by our position and not by the outcome, which, as they well understand, is not always in our hands. Sobolev, who as a UN official, usually speaks more freely than the USSR's other representatives, said simply: The fate of the Arab part of Palestine depends on the outcome of the clash between two forces – Egypt and Transjordan. Lange, the Pole, said: But after all, Abdallah shows the most moderation towards you. For your information, all my talks with the Russians are attended by David Liwszyc, who toes the line set by the Foreign Ministry and hears from the Russians much that is illuminating from Mapam's point of view, such as their readiness to accept every substantive and convincing argument on our part, the absence of any interest in, or concern about, the fate of the Arab refugees, utter contempt for the progressive forces in the Arab states, and so forth.

(14) We are endeavouring to separate the issue of our admission to the UN from the whole set of issues and to present it as a condition for any progress towards a solution and peace. To the Westerners, I present the argument that our non-admission during this [session of the General] Assembly, which means a year's postponement – besides the impact of distancing peace, and the crying injustice that the invaders, the rebels against the UN are in, whereas we, the progeny of the UN, who are defending ourselves, are left out – will be held against the West and will undermine its standing in Israel. I added: In the election campaign I will make no effort to explain your refusal to admit us nor to justify you. This line of argument made an impression on Schuman, Spaak and the Americans. The Americans asked whether we would be ready to declare that our admission was not to be construed as an a priori demarcation

3. This *démarche* was made in Paris to Israeli Foreign Ministry representative Eliahu Sasson (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 2, No. 91, p. 125, No. 101, p. 137 and No. 101, p. 137).

of borders and that we did not intend to achieve a final demarcation by force unless we were attacked. We are looking for a formulation of this sort, one which will satisfy them and not affect us adversely. That is all for now. I have gone on too long and I hope all is understood. Please confirm.

M.S.

194
D. Ben-Gurion to Y. Ratner (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/3
Tel Aviv, 7 November 1948

To Ratner, request of the [General] Staff is as follows:[1]

For the Tank Corps
45 T-34 tanks with 105mm or 75mm guns and the other weapons for these tanks
Ammunition: 1,500 shells for each gun
30,000 bullets for each machine gun
Spare parts and a reserve engine for each tank
Instruments and wireless system
25 rapid light tanks
150 37mm guns [for] mounting on armoured vehicles or guns such as 2-pounders
For guns, armour-piercing ammunition – 90 per cent

For the Artillery Corps
1. 24 self-propelled 75mm guns
2. 180 Bufors medium anti-aircraft guns or a similar type – for an effective range of 10,000 feet
For each gun – 1,000 shells
3. 72 heavy 88mm anti-aircraft guns, either 3.7 or a similar type for an effective range of 30,000 feet
For each gun – 600 shells
4. 80 anti-tank guns, 47mm–50mm effective range 600m
For each gun 800 shells
5. 110 75mm field guns, either 25-pounders or a similar type
For each gun – 3000 shells
6. 24 6" howitzers or 5.5" guns
For each gun – 1,000 shells

1. See Doc. 178.

For the Air Force

50 fighter planes: Spitfires, Mustangs or a similar type in terms of manoeuvrability and fire power

Essential to ensure they have spare parts, (including) an additional engine for each plane – based on a calculation of one year's maintenance.

Likewise essential to ensure a sufficient quantity of oils and special lubricants suitable for the planes that will be purchased, in the event these do not correspond to specifications of Western fuel companies.

Ammunition based on a calculation of 20,000 bullets per automatic weapon

15,000 bullets per cannon

Likewise coils, ammunition belts or magazines suited to weapons and ammunition

24 light two-engine bombers of Beaufighter, Mosquito; 20 Boston 25 Mitchell type, or of similar manoeuvrability and carriage load. Essential [to obtain] samples of suitable bombs and full sets of navigational and wireless instruments.

Spare parts and oils and ammunition as in paragraph (a)

Purchase not to be concluded without participation of experts to finalize all details

Jet planes

Rockets and rocket launchers for planes[2]

Ben-Gurion

195
G. Meyerson to W. Eytan (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 9 November 1948

Many thanks for the clear and excellent report.[1] Golda [Meyerson], Namir, Ratner, and their families attended the parade,[2] which was a tremendous show of strength – army, youth, and workers – and the soirée at Molotov's home, and received a special welcome. Golda also attended a ceremonial session of the Moscow Soviet, at which Molotov spoke. The Israeli flag above the

Doc. 194
2. See Doc. 202.

Doc. 195
1. Doc. 193.
2. On 7 November, commemorating the 31st anniversary of the October Revolution.

Metropole [Hotel]. Ben-Gurion's telegram[3] was published in full in all the papers. Publicize all this, though not in the name of the legation. From this point on, not for publication. According to other legations, we were the centre of attention at the Molotov soirée. Molotov invited Golda for a glass of vodka. She praised the parade and said: If only we had just a few of the weapons in the parade. Molotov replied: You will have, we too began with little. A lengthy, emotional conversation in Yiddish with Molotov's wife, who praised our visits to the synagogue.[4] At her request Sarah and Yael[5] were introduced to her. She spoke to them like a mother and sister and concluded: May things go well for you, and then things will be good for all Jews. Conversations with Popova, the head of the Women's Anti-Fascist Committee, and with the poet Mikhalkov, the composer of the [Soviet] anthem,[6] and others. I encountered Erenburg twice but he avoided a conversation. At the parade Ratner was the only military attaché with whom Slavin, Antonov's deputy, conversed.

Golda

196
I.N. Bakulin to N.G. Pal'gunov (Tel Aviv)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.22, L.19
Moscow, 12 November 1948
Secret/Urgent

To the Executive Director of TASS, Comrade N.G. Pal'gunov,

In order to distribute information from TASS in the State of Israel, our Minister, Comrade Ershov, recommends the establishment of contractual agreements with Israeli telegraph agencies to supply them with material from TASS.

Please give me your views on this suggestion of Comrade Ershov.[1]

Head of the Near and Middle East Department
USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs
I. Bakulin

Doc. 195
3. Doc. 192.
4. See Doc. 180.
5. The daughters of Meyerson and Namir, respectively.
6. Actually, a co-author of the text of the Soviet national anthem.

Doc. 196
1. No information has been found on the TASS reply.

197
I.N. Bakulin to A.I. Denisov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.22, L.20
Moscow, 12 November 1948
Secret/Urgent

To the Chairman of the Board of VOKS, Prof. Denisov,

In order to strengthen and improve our cultural links with the State of Israel, the Minister to Israel Comrade P. I. Ershov suggests that we arrange the following events:

1. Topical exhibitions in Tel Aviv, Haifa, Jerusalem, Petah-Tikva: 'Education in the USSR', 'The Military Skills of the Soviet Army', 'Sport in the USSR', etc.
2. The establishment of a Soviet art department at the Tel Aviv museum library
3. Some evening concerts of Soviet music performed by local musicians
4. Special radio programs of Soviet music from Moscow
5. A series of lectures about the USSR by local lecturers
6. Film screenings for official and public figures
7. Discussion of a future visit to Israel by a group of Soviet actors, a conductor, and some performers

Please give me your opinion concerning these activities proposed by Comrade Ershov, and also concerning VOKS's proposal for furthering development of cultural links with Israel.[1]

Head of the Near and Middle East Department
USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs
I. Bakulin

1. In a letter to Bakulin dated 6 December 1948, member of the VOKS administration L.D. Kislova noted that the materials for the exhibition mentioned in Ershov's letter (point 1) were sent by VOKS in August 1948 with the Soviet legation when it departed for Israel. Kislova emphasized that VOKS representatives in Israel would be responsible for arranging the exhibition. She added that Ershov's proposal (point 7, on visits of Soviet performers and musicians to Israel) was considered by VOKS to be inopportune (AVP RF, f.089, op.1, p.2, d.22, l.26).

198
M. Sladkovskii to I.N. Bakulin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.14, L.4
Moscow, 12 November 1948
Secret

USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs , Near and Middle East Department, Comrade I.N. Bakulin,
In ref. to your No. 1324/obsv:[1]

Prior to the onset of armed conflict between the Arab countries and Palestine, our forward sales contract operations were carried out by our trade attaché in Beirut, and sometimes by the appropriate export departments directly from Moscow.

At present the discussion and conclusion of contracts involving purchases of Soviet commodities either by the Israeli government or by private Palestinian firms are carried out by the Israeli legation's trade attaché in Moscow.[2]

Recently the trade attaché proposed to negotiate a trade agreement between the USSR and Israel. This question is under consideration by the government.

Depending on the decision on the trade agreement, we mean to consider also whether it would be worthwhile to send a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Trade to Israel.

Letters from firms received via our legation are sent on by us to the appropriate organizations in the USSR; they are advised to reply to the firms directly.

We ask you to inform our legation in Tel Aviv about this so that we can answer repeated inquiries from firms about the response to their offers.

For our part we are sending the legation a list of our associations and their addresses, so that in case of further inquiries, the legation can recommend to whom they should turn for the commodities they are interested in.[3]

Head of the Eastern Department
USSR Ministry of Foreign Trade
M. Sladkovskii

---

1. In a letter dated 2 November 1948 and addressed to the Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade, S.P. Migunov, director of Near and Middle East Department Bakulin reported that the Soviet legation in Israel had received offers from Israeli trading companies, particularly with regard to imports from the USSR. Transmitting 13 letters from Israeli businessmen to the minister of foreign trade of the USSR, Bakulin enquired about the attitude of the Ministry of Foreign Trade towards commercial relations with Israel and the possibility of appointing a trade attaché to the legation in Israel. This is the reply to Bakulin's letter (AVP RF, f.089, op.1, p.2, d.14, l.4).
2. See Doc. 190.
3. On 23 November 1948 Bakulin conveyed to Ershov the contents of Sladkovskii's letter (AVP RF, f.089, op.1, p.2, d.14, l.5).

199
Sh. Friedman to G. Meyerson and M. Namir (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.11/2498/10
Tel Aviv, 17 November 1948

A few words of explanation regarding the lists of Prisoners of Zion. The list left behind by Namir was full of mistakes and it's a good thing you didn't take it with you in that form. We have now inserted a series of corrections.[1]

List A – this is the list that was transmitted at the time to Namir with the addition of a few names. It includes people who were incarcerated for matters relating to the Briha at the end of the war and in part at its beginning. This is not a complete list. There are prisoners about whom no reports exist and also others about whose arrest we have no knowledge. Should additional information come in, I will send it to you marked 'List A'.

List B includes Zionist activists who were incarcerated at the beginning of the war in places that came under Soviet rule at the time. The inclusion of these people in 'searches for relatives' and the information we received about them indicated to us that they had been incarcerated some time ago.

I did not want to transmit these names to you by the normal route, and you should inform me whether I acted correctly or showed unnecessary caution. If there are additional cases of this kind and you advise me not to mix them with the normal process of searches for relatives, I will mark them on List B.

The whole issue of Prisoners of Zion, whether to deal with it at all, when to begin, and whether to start with particular types or to present the entire question as a whole, I leave entirely to your discretion on the spot.

To be fair, I consider it my duty to convey the opinion of Mr. West on this subject. He writes me that he is against submitting individual names and that 'this was decided more than once by the Magen organization and was also agreed in consultations with M[oshe] Sh[ertok] and N[ahum] G[oldmann]'. He goes on to write: 'Our demand is to free the thousands of Zionists who are incarcerated explicitly because of Zionism. That list is well known to the Soviet authorities.' In his view, separate action on behalf of the prisoners [arrested in connection with the] Briha could 'definitely bring about the failure of the general operation which our legation in Moscow... will have to undertake. Such an endeavour will only supply ammunition to justify the imprisonment of Zionists altogether, to the detriment of the entire cause.'[2]

If you wish to take my opinion into consideration, I must say to you that I neither share nor accept this position. It seems to me that if it is possible to

---

1. The lists were compiled by Magen (see Doc. 13) and are unrelated to those discussed in Docs. 175 and 219. Both the lists and further correspondence related to this problem are filed under ISA 130.11/2498/11.
2. See B. West to Sh. Friedman, 15 Nov. 1948, ibid.

get something moving in this area, it is easier to explain the matter in relation to people who did something specific only in recent years – such as assisting the immigration of young people to Palestine – and who were not even Soviet citizens for the most part, or perhaps even at all, and whose 'transgression' was more or less concurrent to their becoming [Soviet] citizens.[3] The negotiations concerning them are not likely to produce a direct response regarding the continued membership of Soviet citizens in underground political organizations. Besides, if you have some success in regard to these [prisoners], there would be no reason to assume that this success would seal the fate of prisoners from earlier years. On the contrary, it may create an opening.

But as I said, it is difficult to give advice long distance in this matter, and you must consider and decide.[4]

All the best,
S.F.

200
I.V. Stalin to D. Ben-Gurion (Tel Aviv)

TEL: AVP RF, F.89, OP.1, P.1, D.6, L.10
Moscow, 18 November 1948

To Mr. D. Ben-Gurion, Chairman of the Provisional Government of the State of Israel, Tel Aviv,

Mr. Chairman, please accept my gratitude for your congratulations and good wishes on the occasion of the 31st anniversary of the October revolution.[1]

I. Stalin[2]

Doc. 199

3. See Doc. 3, n. 3.
4. The editors have no information as to whether these lists were, in fact, submitted to the Soviet authorities and what action if any, was taken, by them.

Doc. 200

1. See Doc. 192.
2. At the top is typed: 'Sent in clear on 18.11.48 at 05:47'. Copies sent to Molotov, Zorin, Gusev and the Near and Middle East Department.

201
Sh. Friedman to M. Shertok and G. Meyerson (Paris)[1]

COPY: ISA 130.11/2514/1
Tel Aviv, 21 November 1948
Top Secret

Shalom and Greetings to you both,

I want to report briefly about my latest meetings with Ershov and something concerning his legation. In part these events were related in one of my letters to Golda which went by diplomatic courier and which I would assume she now has.[2]

There were two meetings with the minister, one on 10 November in Eytan's office with my participation. At this meeting he was informed about the situation on the northern and Negev fronts, and about the political situation as it stood then. In the military sphere he was given facts which after a short time were reported in the press, including our penetration into Lebanese territory [and] the surrender of Lebanese villages;[3] in this connection we noted the unique composition of the population in these places. He was also informed about the incident in which a [Lebanese] cabinet minister, who owns land in the border area, sent emissaries with a proposal for surrender. It was stressed that we had no interest in expanding into Lebanese territory and that we were holding various areas temporarily, for purely strategic reasons.

He was also informed about the status of our forces in the Negev,[4] about the situation of Gaza, about its being cut off from the south, and about signs of evacuation by sea – a movement whose character we could not then assess. The blow received by the Egyptian Air Force in this campaign was noted too. We also told him about Abdallah's air force and the fact that the pilots were not Transjordanians but Britons and Iraqis.

The minister asked why, in our view, Abdallah had not come to Egypt's aid. The answer was that he had no interest in the outcome of this campaign, that he aspired above all to preserve the integrity of his forces, that he did not want to be dependent on the British for everything – the ties with them over thirty

1. Shertok was attending the session of the UN General Assembly. Golda Meyerson had been summoned to Paris from Moscow for consultations.
2. See Friedman to Meyerson, 15 Nov. 1948, ISA 130.11/2514/1.
3. On 29 October Israeli forces initiated an operation against the Arab Liberation Army led by Fawzi Qawukji in the central part of Upper Galilee. This army never recognized the authority of the UN and the cease-fire had at no stage been enforced in this region. The Arab forces were defeated and retreated to Lebanon. The Israeli forces crossed the border and occupied a narrow strip of Lebanese territory, including 14 villages whose population was mainly Christian.
4. On 15 October, Israel launched a large-scale operation against Egyptian forces in the Israeli Negev. This operation was designed to lift the Egyptian siege of the Jewish settlements in the Negev and to strengthen the Israeli hold in that area. The Egyptian forces were badly defeated, and evacuated most of the Negev, with one brigade remaining under siege in the so-called Faluja pocket. Hostilities ceased on 22 October following a Security Council cease-fire resolution.

years had effectively not contributed to the progress of his country – and apparently he hoped for a possible agreement with us in the future.

In the political sphere he was told about British intentions to create a vacuum in the Negev and what this entailed, as well as about the indications that British forces were infiltrating Israeli territory. The minister asked our opinion about the prospects for the discussions in Paris and what we knew about the attitude of the United States. We explained the differences of opinion between the president and the State Department.

All these matters are already outdated, and I am giving you this information for the sake of procedure. It is interesting that at the end of the conversation, and without any connection to what we had talked about earlier, the minister noted that he had seen anti-Soviet literature in book stores (I wrote Golda about this). He received a courteous reply, but a proper one.

The second meeting was on Friday, 19 November, and I was the only [Israeli] participant. I came to him about a specific matter: a request that he recommend to his government that it forgo, in our favour, some of the irrigation pipes that are being manufactured in Czechoslovakia. That is the only country from which we can get large quantities [of pipes]. We need 40–50 thousand tons. Their total production is 450 thousand tons a year and it all goes to Russia. The Czechs are prepared to sell to us, but they cannot act on their own accord. Ehud [Avriel] broached this matter with me when he was here, as did Mekorot[5] officials together with Dr. Meron. After the minor incidents which occurred in the meantime, and which I related in my letter to Golda, the invitations to the celebrations, the events that preceded the V League celebrations, the minister's bizarre speech at that celebration,[6] and another matter, which it is not worth dwelling on now, I was afraid that he would receive me coldly. To my great satisfaction, I was wrong. He was pleased to see me, welcomed me with much friendliness, offered me what he had on hand (vodka and... chocolate), listened to my explanation about the great importance of reviving the Negev and other areas, and without any argument promised to cable Moscow on this and try to get our request fulfilled. He also added that there was no need for our legation in Moscow to handle this matter and that we should rely on him.

The conversation took place after our reply to the two resolutions of the Security Council was made public.[7] He expressed his satisfaction at the official

---

5. Israeli water supply company.
6. Reference is to a function held by the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR (formerly V League) on the occasion of the anniversary of the October Revolution. Before the party, the league secretary informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the presence of cabinet ministers at the function was most desirable. In the course of the party, the Soviet minister read a speech which did not include a single reference to the State of Israel (see Friedman to Meyerson, 15 November 1948, ISA 130.11/2514/1).
7. Reference is to the Security Council resolutions of 4 and 16 November regarding the military situation in the Negev. For Israel's reply, see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 2, No. 160, pp. 198–201.

reply, praised our good sense, asked whether there was still a danger of a motion to sever the Galilee from our state, and if it was true that at the time, before the last truce, our forces were ready to strike in the Triangle.[8] Among other points, I told him – after consulting with W[alter] E[ytan] – of our conjecture that Abdallah's negotiations with us were being conducted without the knowledge of the British, and about British pressure on Abdallah regarding the capture of the Triangle. Afterwards the conversation turned to our legation in Moscow, the high cost of living there, and other incidental matters.

In the same conversation he told me, in reply to my question, that they did not have a trade attaché here, and that he had placed responsibility for dealing with economic questions upon his counsellor. In the coming days we will arrange a meeting between him and Meron, and I foresee that they will raise the question of who should visit whom. Such issues greatly preoccupy them.

One comment about the idea of M[oshe] S[hertok] holding a 'thorough' conversation concerning *aliya* from and Zionism in the countries of the [Soviet] bloc. After I get a clear directive on this matter, I will also be ready to embark on the conversation here, but I doubt whether it will be possible in such a conversation to ignore altogether Russia itself.

Shalom and all success.

Sh. Friedman

202
I.N. Bakulin to V.A. Zorin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.1, D.5, L.17
Moscow, 24 November 1948
Secret

To Comrade V.A. Zorin,

In a conversation with me on 11 November this year, the minister of the State of Israel in Moscow, Golda Meyerson, and the military attaché of the Israeli legation, Ratner, communicated to me the Israeli government's request to the Soviet government for assistance to the State of Israel in the form of heavy weapons and other equipment required by the Israeli army.[1] The military attaché, Colonel Ratner, said that what the Israeli army needed most of all was artillery, tanks and aircraft, and that in the application for arms sent by the Israeli government the types of heavy weapons and other equipment

---

Doc. 201
8. The part of Palestine occupied by Transjordan on the West Bank of the Jordan River.

Doc. 202
1. See Doc. 194.

required were indicated. I replied that I would pass the Israeli government's request on to the Ministry leadership (cf. conversation of 11 November 1948).

Meyerson and Military Attaché Ratner may return to the question and ask about our response to the Israeli government's request. In case of such an inquiry, I think we might tell them that the Soviet government is paying close attention to the fate of the State of Israel and defends its right of sovereignty and independent existence; but it does not want to come into conflict either with the Security Council decision on the cessation of hostilities in Palestine or with the ban on UN members supplying weapons to the countries fighting in Palestine.

We have given the same answer to an analogous question through Comrade Gromyko to the Israeli representative[2] to the UN in New York.

Please give me your instructions.[3]

I. Bakulin

203
I.V. Polianskii to V.A. Zorin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.12, LL.32–3
Moscow, 30 November 1948
Secret

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Comrade V.A. Zorin,

In addition to the information already reported to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the actions of the legation of the State of Israel to the USSR concerning the Choral Synagogue in Moscow,[1] the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults attached to the USSR Council of Ministers notes that some of the legation staff, and particularly its first counsellor Mr. Namir, are apparently trying to establish closer relations with the Rabbi of the Moscow Choral Synagogue than might be justified by ritual and religious motives alone. Without going into the ulterior purpose of such attempts, the council thinks that in itself, the very fact of private visits to the rabbi by diplomatic representatives of the State of Israel must inevitably encourage undesirable attitudes among a certain sector of Jewish citizens of the USSR who visit the synagogue.

Doc. 202

2. In the original the word *evreiam* (to the Jews) crossed out.
3. Later, in a meeting with Vyshinskii on 14 April 1949, Meyerson returned to the issue of arms (see Doc. 238). The following handwritten note is appended: 'Comrade Bakulin, write memorandum to Comrade Molotov, 25.11., V. Zorin.'

Doc. 203

1. See Doc. 179.

Therefore the council has advised the synagogue's rabbi, citizen S.M. Shlifer, to find some plausible excuse to cancel the visit which Mr. Namir intended to pay on 30 November; Shlifer was informed about this [visit] by the second secretary of the legation, Mr. Lapid, by telephone.

Considering, however, that this declining [of a visit] by the rabbi alone, will have only a temporary and indeed insufficiently convincing effect, and that attempts to make personal visits will obviously take place in the future, the council is at a loss, not knowing how to prevent further attempts.

The situation is made more difficult by the fact that, in accordance with the council's recommendations, back in September of this year, the rabbi explicitly informed legation representatives visiting him that his relations with them could not exceed the bounds determined by the cult, i.e., only providing them with places in the synagogue during prayer meetings. But, as the above-mentioned fact indicates, the legation's personnel are ignoring the rabbi's warning.

Please inform me of your opinion on the issue mentioned in the letter.[2]

Chairman of the Council for Religious Cults
Attached to the USSR Council of Ministers
Polianskii

204
M. Namir to W. Eytan (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 2 December 1948

At the Albanians' reception I spoke for more than an hour with Erenburg. He referred to all the articles against him in our press and claimed that they were personal attacks on him.[1] In general he continues to espouse his view that the state should absorb only those who are persecuted. There is no Jewish question in Russia, and his friendly advice is to dispense with any attempt to attract them [Russian Jews] to Zionism and *aliya*, otherwise we will arouse the anger of the government and of the local Jews. On the other hand, he hinted indirectly at a positive revision in his stand regarding immigration from the People's Democracies; he believes that our geopolitical situation is creating an objective danger, that we will become enslaved to the Americans, and that in the event of a third [world] war the Jews of Russia and the Jews of Israel are

---

Doc. 203
2. At the bottom of the document the following handwritten note is appended: 'Reply given by Comrade Zorin and repeated by telephone. Bakulin.'

Doc. 204
1. See Doc. 176.

liable to find themselves in two opposing camps. He noted this possibility with gloomy concern. He agrees to visit Israel, but not at present, because today this would be interpreted as a political act. He did not explain what he meant by a political act, and the conversation, which was conducted in an atmosphere of moderation, displayed a deep-seated anti-Zionism and a hopeless equivocation between the duty to support Israel and the fear that Zionism would make inroads with Russian Jewry. There may be an echo here of thinking within government circles. He asked for his book, *The Storm*, in the Hebrew translation. Send a few copies immediately.

Namir

205
M. Namir to Sh. Friedman (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 10 December 1948

Sign of Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee removed. Think institution has been liquidated.[1]

Namir

206

Meeting: M. Shertok – A. Vyshinskii (Paris, 12 December 1948)

REPORT: ISA 130.11/2502/8

I have had a conversation with Vyshinskii. I sent you a telegram about my first conversation.[1] In that talk Malik was also present and David Liwszyc accompanied me. I asked Vyshinskii, in that conversation, whether he had ever had occasion to deal with our affairs, and he replied that this was his first meeting. It was a satisfactory meeting, Vyshinskii displayed considerable understanding. At one stage in the conversation he asked: Are you growing stronger in terms of people in the meantime? I said: Yes. Since then I thought

---

Doc. 205

1. This information proved correct. The last edition of the committee's bulletin *Eynikeyt* appeared on 20 November. The leading members of the committee were arrested, and later tried and executed. Altogether, between 1948 and 1952 over one hundred people were brought to trial in the so-called Jewish Anti-Fascist Case (see Redlich, *War, Holocaust and Stalinism*, pp. 145–58).

Doc. 206

1. See report of this meeting in Doc. 188.

about his question and I concluded that one day we should hold a thorough talk on *aliya* with that person.

On the day before his departure, I asked to speak with him. Between one session and the next Vyshinskii came over to me and asked: Perhaps we can talk now? I said: But not while standing, or perhaps you are not free? He scheduled the meeting for 2:30, and the General Assembly session was scheduled to begin at 3:00. In other words, he set aside only half an hour for this conversation. In fact, it lasted much longer.

In the meeting I told him that I wanted to use the opportunity of my acquaintance with him – he is the first Soviet statesman of this rank with whom we have had the opportunity to speak – in order to address questions that go beyond the framework of the issues that concern the UN: the very existence and future of the State of Israel.

I added that he himself, in the previous conversation, had given me an opening to raise this question – when he asked whether we were becoming stronger in numbers – and that I wanted an opportunity to discuss the immigration issue with him. I said that I did not wish to repeat what the declaration and the Soviet position *vis-à-vis* our country meant to us. We presumed that the Soviet Union had determined its stand after much consideration. We were not inclined to accuse it of superficiality and inconclusiveness, and in general we believed it had adopted positions which took into account all the conclusions that derived from them. However, I wanted to be sure that this applied to us as well. I was mentioning this because this was an important issue for us, and I did not know whether they had studied it as carefully as we thought it merited. In this conversation I told him: At a certain stage you addressed the problem, saw the facts, then came to certain conclusions; you decided that our cause was just and you concluded that our cause dovetailed with your view of the future of the world.

You certainly understand that our enterprise in this land was not created overnight, it is the result of a historical process. The seven hundred thousand Jews who reside in the Land of Israel did not all arrive together. This is a movement, a process. For us it is the process of the Jewish people's return to its land, the ingathering of the scattered members of the Jewish people (I used the expression '*sobranie naroda evreiskogo*'). It is the return of the people to its land. This movement means that the Jewish people will have no security as long as it is dispersed and cannot achieve independence in other countries. It can achieve independence if it ingathers [Jews] in its land. Therefore, what you perhaps see as an ordinary static situation of a state that ostensibly exists, for us is only one stage in the dynamic process of the Jewish people's return to its homeland and the ingathering there of its dispersed members. It is inconceivable to us that this process will terminate; on the contrary, we established a state so that it could be intensified.

Above all there is the great historical issue – that the Jewish people should be given the right to ingather in its land – but the immediate situation has

extremely urgent aspects. It is not enough to formally establish the State of Israel, not enough to defend it successfully; we have a vision of peace with the surrounding Arab world – we will not achieve this quickly, but if we do it will only be because we are strong. Being strong does not mean only military strength, although that is very important; it means large masses of people residing together on their soil, working it, and developing it. That requires large-scale immigration – otherwise we will not be able to stand firm; and you should be interested in this state growing, first of all numerically.

Let me give you an example. The Jews waged a campaign for the Israeli Negev, and for the time being we have succeeded in this campaign. We won a political victory by disposing of the Bernadotte Plan[2] and until now we have won a military victory, but can we make do with this? No, we cannot make do with this because these victories alone do not yet assure our control the Negev. As long as the Negev is unpopulated and undeveloped, we will not be able to justify to the world our taking over the Negev – unless we can give it substance in the form of people and development. Without large numbers of people this will not be done.

Here I moved on to delicate ground, saying: There is also a problem of the Jews' need to settle in Israel. And your position regarding the Jews in the [DP] camps is that they must emigrate to Israel. But there are countries – and here I referred to the countries of North Africa – from which not all the Jews have to be brought to Israel. It is not so much a question of quantity, but also of the quality of the people. Our role in Israel is a pioneering one, and we need people who possess a certain resilience. We are very interested in bringing the Jews of Morocco to Israel and we are also investing great efforts in that regard, but we cannot rely on the Jews of Morocco alone to build the country, because they have not been trained for that. As you are undoubtedly aware, when it comes to building the land, the Jews of Eastern Europe are the salt of our earth. In the past it was the Jews of Russia.

In the period before the First World War the Jews of Russia constituted the overwhelming majority of our immigrants, and this has repercussions to this day. If you look at the leaders here and at the composition of our government, you will see that the majority are of Russian extraction. This does not mean that Jews from other countries did not make their own contribution to the country: we had immigration from Germany and America, and those immigrants brought with them a great deal of energy and initiative. But if we are talking about a large group effort by masses of people who must in their persons realize this pioneering potential – then our great reservoir is the Jews of Eastern Europe.

Following the changed condition of Russia's Jews after the First World War, this role was filled by the Jews of Poland and Romania. Therefore, if we wish to build the state, every effort must be made to bring to Israel masses of Jews from the countries of Eastern Europe, from the countries that are allied with

2. See Doc. 174, n. 2.

you. This is also why I am making the effort to explain this issue to you. Let me now survey all the countries with you: Yugoslavia, where there are eight thousand Jews, one-tenth the number of Jews who lived there before the war. That country is allowing us to take out half the Jews and is formulating a principle of free self-determination: a Jew who defines himself as belonging to the State of Israel is given the possibility to leave the country. A second country, Bulgaria – 35–40,000 Jews live there. More or less the same agreement is in effect there. Some of the immigrants are already on the way. I suppose that should another few thousand Jews from that country wish to settle in Israel, we would be able to bring them. Poland, where there are 70–80,000 Jews, has set a principle which definitely satisfies us if it will only be implemented properly: every Jew is free to leave Poland unless he decides to stay. True, this principle has two qualifications: (a) the departure of Jews whom the state needs to fulfil a particular role must be deferred; (b) the departure of Jews who it can be assumed will harm Poland when abroad must be deferred. I told him that we want first to see how this will be implemented in practice, and then perhaps we will have something to say. In any event, this is the situation today, and therefore I am not raising the question of Poland in the conversation with you.

Hungary – where there are today nearly 200,000 Jews and there are undoubtedly tens of thousands who wish to immigrate to Israel, but the situation regarding them is not clear. However, the main problem we face, about which we think a crisis point has been reached, is Romania. On the one hand, this is the most important Jewish community for us. It is also the largest – 350,000 Jews – he told me later that of all these countries he knows Romania.[3] Still, it is not the numerical side alone that accounts for the importance of that country, but the fact that this is our largest reservoir of pioneering potential. There is a tradition there of pioneering immigration, and it is here of all places that we are encountering misunderstanding. I do not want to make things easier for myself by hiding the difficulties from you. The question is whether this issue is reconcilable with the regime, but we assume that if there is a basic position that favours Israel, then this [i.e., permission to emigrate] should be accepted. However, this is not clear to everyone.

The situation is further compounded by a unique factor: the Jewish communists. They can be divided into two types: there are Jewish communists who are only communists, and there are Jewish communists who are both communists and Jews, and the complication arises in our relations with the latter. There was a time, before the Soviet Union adopted its present position, that there was a kind of competition in the Jewish public as to who would achieve hegemony there, the Zionists or the communists. The communists

3. Vyshinskii was in Romania in February–March 1945. On 27 February he met with King Michael and presented him with an ultimatum, demanding the installation of a pro-Soviet government. The Groza government was announced on 6 March and two days later, pledged its allegiance to Stalin (see King, *Minorities under Communism,* pp. 40–1).

claimed that we were dragging the Jews to some far-off, out-of-the-way land, thus draining the reservoir of Jewish strength, which is intended for other purposes – for class and revolutionary purposes in the countries where the Jews reside.

In the meantime there has been a change: you have taken a clear stand, but apparently not everyone has drawn the logical conclusions, and this difficulty still remains. You must know that we have organizations that deal with these things, perhaps not all of them are acceptable to the regime, but our generation's mission is to establish the State of Israel and defend it. These two tasks cannot be fulfilled without the unity of all the forces of the Jewish people. We demand the right to bring to Israel all the Jews who wish to come, without discrimination. We assume responsibility for these Jews and we demand our right to bring them to Israel, and they will become citizens of the State of Israel.

There is still the question of our relations with American Jewry. We will not build our country without major assistance from the Jews of America. Even today we are buckling under the burden of the war costs (Tsarapkin took notes throughout the entire meeting and Vyshinskii listened; they are people with extraordinary discipline). I said that it is inconceivable that the seven hundred thousand Jews in the Land of Israel should by themselves mobilise all the means to finance the war, underwrite the large-scale immigration, and also finance the tremendous development enterprise that we have to implement: irrigation, development and building, and other investments. The American Jews insist that the assistance they contribute should be enjoyed by all Jews, with no discrimination. If they discover that there is discrimination and that we are reconciling ourselves to it, their assistance will decrease, and if their assistance decreases the state will fall and their policy will collapse, and there will be a unending chain reaction.

I am speaking to you about this because it is important for me to reach an understanding with you and obtain your help.

To this he replied: I have understood your position and I consider it to be justified from your point of view. You are also absolutely right in taking that position even when you come to me with this demand. Fundamentally, the question is one of relations between states, what the State of Israel demands of other states. (He manoeuvered the issue on to that track.) Within such a framework there could be clashes of interest. You say: you need these people; and Romania can say the same thing: we need these people. If so, a way out must be found. I said: Above all, I want your understanding, and if you can help – so much the better. And then he said: Well, who will forgo help?

Vyshinskii pointed out that all the countries I mentioned were young states, like ours, and as such were as sensitive as we were. He said: As it happens, I know Romania, I went there to exert influence on them in diverse matters, and it was not always easy. For a big state it is no problem to make some sort of concession, but a small state exaggerates the difficulty, as is only natural.

There was a border dispute between Czechoslovakia and Poland and between Romania and Czechoslovakia, and the differences had to be set straight. There were other delicate questions and complications in this matter: by this was meant people who will leave Romania and might do it harm.

I asked: What does doing it harm mean? He said: Carrying out activities against them. I said: After all, do you not have democracy? Here he understood that a slip of the tongue was being used against him, since he had earlier used the word 'democracy'. He said that by this he had meant that every person and every circle aspires to express its views and to carry out actions on its own accord. I told him: Yes, but these people, when they come to us, do so, after all, because they want to be part of the people of Israel and citizens of the State of Israel. And then they must accept the imperative of the State of Israel. I told him: You have no idea how beloved you are by our capitalists. One of the important things for us is friendship with the Soviet Union, because it is crucial for Israel. He said: But there could be people who in the past supported Maniu.[4] I told him that I was not speaking about public figures. True, in my mind's eye I immediately thought of Zissu, who was in danger and whom I would very much have liked to extricate (there was no report of his arrest, but he was on a very black list).[5] I emphasized that I was not talking about public figures at the moment. What concerned us was the general community, the whole group. I said: These people, a population of three hundred and fifty thousand people, are a community, totally uprooted. The Nazis destroyed them; the new regime has not yet revived them; it will not be easy to do so within Romania. Special efforts are required to do this, whereas with us this population will immediately become involved in productive work.

In passing, I said: Besides the question of our national interest, if we take a general humane and progressive approach to this question, I want you to know we believe that the productive capacity of every Jewish community anywhere in the world increases tenfold when it is transferred to Israel – not because the Land of Israel is so wonderful, but because it is the only country in which the Jewish population lives a life of national responsibility and knows that its achievements are its own and its failures cannot be blamed on anyone else. This intensifies its productive ability. He said that these Jews may be needed in Romania. In this connection I posed a question: Do you understand what it means for us to receive a hundred thousand Jews from Romania and what it means for Romania to lose a hundred thousand residents? I asked him how many people there were in Romania. He said that there were eighteen million residents there. I said: What is it for Romania to lose a hundred thousand compared to our great interest in receiving a hundred thousand,

4. Iuliu Maniu, Romanian statesman, leader of the National Peasant Party and former prime minster of Romania, sentenced in 1947 to life imprisonment on charges of treason.
5. A.L. Zissu, Romanian Zionist leader, president of the Romanian Zionist Federation, arrested in May 1950 for Zionist activities. He was sentenced to life imprisonment, but was released in 1956.

whom we will immediately absorb into the process of work, production, and defence? Upon hearing these comments of mine he fell silent. Afterwards he said: You mentioned at the outset of your remarks that you are not sure, or that you would like to be sure, that when we took this stand, we did so bearing in mind all the conclusions it entails. I cannot comment officially in this regard in the name of the government, but I will say frankly in my own name: As far as I am concerned, I cannot say that I have drawn all the conclusions. What you said requires study, consideration, and decision. Your remarks will be conveyed to the government, to Molotov, and perhaps even higher. As he said this, the fact that Tsarapkin was taking notes lent his remarks a certain importance (it is interesting that they are especially scrupulous about recording their own remarks), and afterwards he added: We can talk more about this. I said: If you have a response, I will be very grateful to you, and you can reply through Mrs. Meyerson or through Mr. Ershov. He said that Mrs. Meyerson could also raise the issue. That, more or less, was the conversation.

Afterwards we spoke a little about the UN resolution.[6] And here he interpolated something like: Well, your relations with America hold out dangers. I said: Mr. Vyshinskii, life is full of dangers. What should we conclude from this? Not to live, to commit suicide? – We have to live and take the risks. To this he said: Still, when those rich Jews in America help you they are helping only out of Jewish nationalist motives; nevertheless, they do not cease to be citizens of the United States, and they are liable, consciously or unconsciously, to serve as an instrument of United States policy. I said: What does that mean? These people see themselves as citizens of the Jewish people and they are helping their people build its state, which they also need. He said that he understood and agreed with me. They do this to satisfy their Jewish national aspirations. However, they can become a tool in the hands of the government to which they are subject. I said: If there are such dangers – we have to fight against them and prevail. He said: Just so! Just so! I said that we are building a State of Israel which will be free and not subservient. He said: In this General Assembly we have gained a tremendous victory (what I heard in his words, when he said 'we', was that he meant not only the Soviet Union but for the alliance between us) in overthrowing the Bernadotte Plan and the first Anglo-American resolution. That is tremendous! But look what happened yesterday: yesterday we sustained a practical and juridical defeat with the establishment of the Conciliation Commission. Because that is an American commission. What value does France have, after all it carries no weight now, its value is nil. What value does Turkey have? It is an American commission and they will try

6. Reference is to the UN General Assembly resolution of 11 December on the Palestine issue. This resolution established the Conciliation Commission for Palestine designed to assist the parties in settling all outstanding issues between them, resolved that all refugees wishing to return to Palestine would be allowed to do so, and that compensation would be paid to all who did not wish to do so. For the resolution in its entirety, see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 2, Appendix G, pp. 639–41. The Conciliation Commission was made up of the US, France and Turkey.

to push their interests through. I said that we would cope with this. And then he said that we should not be overly optimistic regarding America. I said it was not a question of optimism, but American assistance was essential for us – without it we would fall. He said that he knew this. I do not remember what the last words were, but with this the conversation ended. He did not set a date to continue the conversation and I said that I would be pleased to receive a reply through Mrs. Meyerson or someone else. To this he made no reply. I think he went too far when he said: 'Perhaps these remarks will be conveyed higher.'

207
M. Namir to G. Meyerson and Sh. Friedman (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 16 December 1948

Novoe vremia, No. 51, in its 'International Life' section, which consists of eight items, prints a passage of 71 lines entitled 'From a Foreign Voice', containing an attack on certain circles and part of the press in Israel, which have openly taken an unfriendly attitude towards the Soviet Union, despite its consistent aid to Israel. The Zionist paper *Hamashkif*, *Haboker*, and the weekly *Beterem* are said to be particularly vigorous disseminators of anti-Soviet calumnies. In reference to *Beterem*, they cite an article about the Jews of the Soviet Union which seeks to vilify the national policy of the Soviet Union, as though the Jews' economic situation here were bad, especially with regard to medical assistance and freedom of speech and organization – apparently they mean Schwartz's article in the September issue.[1] *Hamashkif* published an insinuation from the diplomatic sphere to the effect that on 8 November there had been a state of emergency in Tel Aviv but the Soviet minister had moved around freely collecting information.[2] *Haboker*, followed by a series of other papers, offers various descriptions of the ostensibly difficult situation of the Israeli legation in Moscow. To substantiate this lie, *Haboker* relates that one of the legation staff was denied permission to see his mother, who lives in Moscow (apparently *Haboker*, page 2, 30 November). The article continues: This reactionary tendency of the Israeli press disparages the importance of the Soviet activity at the UN session in defence of Israel and underscores the American influence. To the detriment of the Jewish people, they are carrying

1. Reference is to Harry Schwartz, 'How Russia Solved the Jewish Problem', which appeared in the 6 September issue of *Beterem*.
2. On 8 November, Tel Aviv was under curfew owing to a population census. The Soviet minister, who had appropriate documents, was detained by soldiers but was allowed to proceed after a brief security check (see *Hamashkif*, 9 November 1948).

out the directives of the American monopolies. We denied the damaging report in *Haboker* with a deliberately uncoded cable.[3] Perhaps you should have a talk with the Russian minister and explain the oppositionary character of *Haboker* and *Hamashkif* and their limited influence,[4] as well as [the fact that] *Beterem* is the journal of an individual who also attacks England and America and our own government,[5] but also publishes [material] favourable to Russia. Perhaps it would be useful if Levavi were to explain the same thing to the head of the Press Department here. Cable immediately what action you are taking and your instructions.[6]

Namir

208
V.A. Zorin to G.G. Karpov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.1, P.2, D.12, LL.34–5
Moscow, 22 December 1948
Secret

To the Chairman of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church attached to the USSR Council of Ministers, Comrade G.G. Karpov,

During his conversation with our minister on 17 December in Tel Aviv, Archimandrite Leonid[1] reported as follows:

The overwhelming majority of nuns, pilgrims and other clergy met him with enthusiasm.[2] Only 2 monks and 6 nuns of the Gornenskii Monastery remained loyal to Anastasii, refusing to recognize Aleksii or to participate in his services.[3]

Gradually order is being established. Services are held regularly. Relations with the Jewish authorities are normal, and they do not create any obstacles.

Doc. 207

3. See Namir to Friedman, 16 Dec. 1948, ISA 130.11/2513/15.
4. *Haboker* and *Hamashkif* were, respectively, the daily papers of the General Zionists and Herut opposition parties.
5. *Beterem* was edited and issued by Eliezer Livneh, a right-wing member of Mapai and a staunch advocate of a pro-American orientation.
6. Friedman replied that the above-mentioned press reports had been discussed in the course of a meeting he had had at the Soviet legation before the publication of the article in *Novoe vremia*. He therefore assumed that the article was based on information received from the legation. In the course of the discussion in the legation he had pointed out that newspapers were prone to publish sensations, and that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not take a serious view of such publications. Following the receipt of Namir's earlier telegram (see n. 3 above), the ministry had published a *dëmenti* in the press (see Friedman to the Israeli legation in Moscow, 24 Dec. 1948, ISA 130.09/2305/3).

Doc. 208

1. See Doc. 182. Archimandrite Leonid arrived in Israel on 19 November 1948.
2. On the conflict of loyalty between the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and the Moscow Patriarchate as reflected in the attitudes of monks and nuns of the Gornenskii monastery, see Monk Isai's report to Patriarch Aleksii, 28 Sept. 1948, ISA 130.11/2501/19.
3. Anastasii headed the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

[Dov] Joseph, the governor of Jerusalem, sent for Leonid on 20 December, and Leonid presumes that he will discuss the transfer of the Ecclesiastical Mission's property.

Leonid will declare his readiness to accept the property, contracts and financial records, and then, with the [Israeli] government commissioner for Russian property Rabinovich,[4] he will go to Tiberias, Haifa and Jaffa, and will record the condition of the property in a document. At the same time, he will appoint his temporary representatives in those places.

The church and buildings in Jerusalem, not to mention other places, are in a state of neglect, and they are in need of repairs, which should also be made to enhance the authority of the ecclesiastical mission and the prestige of the Russian Church in Palestine. Income received from the tenants is negligible because the major part of the property in Jerusalem belongs to the Palestine Society, and therefore it will not cover the mission's expenditures. With the acquisition of the Palestine Society's property, the situation will change – not only will the expenditures of both organizations be covered but also considerable amounts will become the state revenue. However, right now the ecclesiastical mission should be helped. We should also arrange for newspapers to be delivered by airmail: two copies of *Izvestiia*, 2 copies of *Pravda*, and ten copies of *The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*.

In our minister's opinion, Archimandrite Leonid should be promoted to the rank of bishop because representatives of other denominations in Jerusalem have higher ranks than his. This situation puts Leonid in a position unequal to them and will hamper his work.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR asks you to give your view of these questions.[5]

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR
V. Zorin

4. See Doc. 163.
5. At the top of the document the following handwritten note is appended: 'To Comrade Podvigin — deal with this.' Podvigin, an official of the Middle East Department, formerly served as consul of the Soviet legation in Beirut.

209
Meeting: D. Ben-Gurion – P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv, 27 December 1948)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2410/20

Following the meal (which was full and heaping and served in the best taste, and, I am afraid – strictly kosher) Ershov took me to a special room and spoke with me privately for about an hour and a half. At first the talk focused on the Negev. I explained the situation, the Egyptian lines in the west and the east, the situation at the time of the conversation, and the prospects, as well as English policy and the source of its opposition to our obtaining the Negev.[1] I took the opportunity to explain the necessity of settling the Negev quickly and of populating it with about a million Jews in the very near future – because we will not hold the Negev by military force alone. England will not easily abandon its plans, nor do we have any interest in holding just a desert. Ershov asked whether the Negev was important to us because of oil. I explained why we attached more importance to water than to oil, and outlined our irrigation plans, and I returned to the issue of *aliya*. I said that the million needed for the Negev are to be found mainly in Europe, in the West and the East, but mainly in the East. He asked why not from the United States, and I explained why no mass immigration from America could be expected in the near future, although there was pioneer-oriented immigration even now and it would certainly increase. I emphasized the urgency of settling the Negev and that immediately after the war we would have to launch massive settlement. I mentioned the Shertok–Vyshinskii conversation on this subject[2] (Ershov knew of it), and Ershov asked whether we were referring to the Jews of the Soviet Union. I replied that at this time we had in mind first of all the Jews of Romania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Poland, and Yugoslavia – placing special emphasis on the Jews of Romania. Ershov asked about Tito. I told him that there were currently no difficulties being raised by Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, but that in the other East European countries *aliya* was for some reason being halted, which was a serious blow to the Negev and to our future in general. Ershov refrained from taking a stand on this subject, even though I returned to it several times.

The conversation turned to the prospects for peace, and Ershov noted that Abdallah would undoubtedly make peace if the British were to stop

1. On 22 December the IDF opened a large-scale military operation in the Negev designed to clear Jewish designated areas of Egyptian forces. In the course of this operation, known as Operation Horev, the Egyptian forces suffered severe defeats and were driven back beyond Palestine's international border. However, Egyptian forces in the Gaza Strip and in the Faluja pocket (see Doc. 201, n. 4) held fast. In the course of the hostilities, Israeli forces penetrated the Sinai Peninsula, causing remonstrations on the part of Great Britain and the US. Following these protests and the Security Council cease-fire resolution of 29 December, Israeli forces withdrew to the international border.
2. See Doc. 206.

interfering. He spoke of Faruq as a corrupt, contemptible young man. I told him that a meeting with the Lebanese was imminent.[3] From regional matters the conversation shifted to global affairs – England and America and Turkey. He complained about the fluctuations in American policy in general and in regard to Israel. He told me about several conversations between Bedell Smith and Stalin. I explained to him the situation in America before the elections: [the presence of] a weak president who had not been elected and a State Department that knew very well what it wanted, and no coordination between the president's policy and that of the bureaucrats, who were in fact in control; and the change that had occurred after the elections: an elected president with authority, whose support was based upon the progressive forces in America. Later in the discussion of Soviet-American relations Ershov said something that took me by surprise: he expressed his conviction that America and Russia would soon be reconciled, that all the verbal disagreements were not serious, and that no importance should be attached to them. He said this with a determination and conviction that surprised and astonished me. This was in fact the only issue on which he was so outspoken. His comments on British contained no hatred, but unwarranted disparagement, in my opinion, of its strength, and exaggeration of its economic dependence on America.

Speaking of the difference between American and Russian policy – the former fluctuating, the latter firm and constant – he corrected himself in mid-speech and added that the Soviet Union also changed its policy on occasion. As an example he cited Turkey – the tremendous assistance, political and economic, that was given to Atatürk's Turkey and the change that had occurred over time. He went on at some length about Turkey – he had spent some years in Ankara – and since I had also been in Turkey[4] we had a common subject for conversation. I do not know whether this was a coincidence or whether there was some intention behind it. He said he was amazed that the Turks were now relying on America, since in the event of a war it was clear that Turkey would be captured by the Red Army within two or three days, and all the arms sent by America would be of no avail.

He also asked where we would find the resources for large-scale settlement in the Negev and for irrigation projects. The final part of the conversation was devoted to reminiscences of life in Moscow during the war and the suffering endured by Leningrad and a number of other cities.

I took my leave of him at 11:30.

D.B.G.

---

3. The meeting did not take place (see Doc. 210).
4. Ben-Gurion enrolled as a law student in Istanbul in 1912. His studies were interrupted by the outbreak of World War I.

210
Sh. Friedman to M. Namir (Moscow)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2514/1
Tel Aviv, 31 December 1948

To Namir, Shalom and Greetings,

Golda's [Meyerson] visit here[1] naturally gave us a feeling of being close to the events at your end, and we spoke with her in detail – about everything, I think. Still, communications with you have been rather spotty. I am now renewing them and I will be sure to keep them up, as before.

Recently, we had an official meeting with the minister. As chance would have it, it took place on the second day of our renewed operations in the Negev.[2] Naturally, the conversation revolved mainly around those operations. I will note here that in my meeting with him previous to this conversation, on the evening of 22 December – that is, on the eve of the start of the operations – he showed considerable expertise in our affairs. He knew that the operation was beginning in those very hours; the next day he knew it had tapered off because of the rains. In the official conversation he emphasized that his information came, as he put it, 'from an official person'. I did not dwell on this point, but we should be aware of it and take into account the scope of their information. He was mistaken in one detail. He thought the operations were supposed to develop around Aqaba.

In the official conversation – Eytan and myself – he was apprised of the situation on the fronts, of Lebanon's readiness for negotiations with us, and of the fact that they had flinched at the last minute and had not come to the officially scheduled meeting. We stressed the fact that Syrian forces were present in Lebanon, that the Syrian government refused to remove its troops, and that there was tension between the two countries in this area. He was told that we were under pressure to evacuate the 14 villages we captured in Lebanon, that we needed these sites only for strategic reasons, and that we would agree to evacuate them when serious negotiations began on an armistice and on peace. Regarding the Negev he was told about the developments that preceded the operations: our agreement to remove the Egyptians from Faluja by stages if negotiations began simultaneously. He was told that we had submitted to the opposing side a plan for this gradual evacuation and a program of meetings for negotiations, [and] that the Egyptians had already informed Riley of their consent to this at the time and after numerous delays had retracted it. Hence our freedom of action. We informed him of the

1. Golda Meyerson returned to Israel for a home leave and consultations. She returned to Moscow in mid-January.
2. See Doc. 209 and n. 1 there.

contents of our letter to Riley from the 22nd of this month, which was about to be made public.[3]

His questions: What is the character of the negotiations that we are demanding? Have we begun the gradual evacuation of Faluja? What is our evaluation of the Conciliation Commission?

He was told about Sasson's lengthy work in Paris[4] and that despite the readiness of Lebanon, Egypt, and Transjordan for negotiations with us there was no prospect of this in the near future, and only local agreements on minor matters were possible. The reason: the mutual fear of the Arab states and the atmosphere on the eve of their [Arab] League Council [meeting].

He was given detailed informed about Aqaba from the geographic and political point of view and about the deception contained in the well-known statement by the British concerning our penetration into forbidden territory.[5] Here we explained, in reply to his question, the reason for France's position *vis-à-vis* Jerusalem: its desire to resume its former role of defender of Christendom, in the hope – contrary to the aim of the British – of returning to the Near East.

Finally, he asked how we assessed our international situation following the UN Assembly in Paris. It was emphasized in our reply that in large measure our international situation was now and would continue to be the result of the consolidation of our strength here, and we made special reference to the high immigration figures, which were in fact increasing by the month.

Recently there had been several unofficial meetings with the minister. Twice he gave a dinner at his residence: once in honour of Dr. Weizmann; the second time in honour of Ben-Gurion.[6] In elegant fashion, in a pleasant atmosphere, with plentiful food and drink. On each occasion the minister held a private conversation, the first time with the president, the second time with B[en]-G[urion], the latter quite a lengthy conversation. B-G will apprise me of the content of the talk and I will fill you in.

I visited the minister with Golda. We were not sure as to the right form for their meeting, but because of her travels this was all that could be arranged and it was essential that she meet with him. The conversation was inconclusive, in the full sense of the word.

All the best,

Sh. Friedman

---

3. For Eytan's letter to Riley, chief of staff of the UN observers in Palestine, see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 2, No. 272, pp. 313–14.
4. Sasson was sent to Paris in October 1948, in order to meet and negotiate with Arab emissaries in Europe and the Middle East.
5. Reference is presumably to a statement of 8 December by Harold Beeley in the Security Council's subcommittee responsible for monitoring cease-fire violations in the Negev, that according to his information, Israeli forces were advancing toward the Red Sea and had made incursions across the Transjordanian border. Beeley warned that if that information was confirmed, Great Britain might be obliged to take action under its treaty with Transjordan (see *The Times*, 9 Dec., 1948).
6. See Doc. 209.

211
Meeting: Sh. Friedman – M.L. Mukhin
(Tel Aviv, 11 January 1949)

COPY: ISA 130.09/2410/20

I was to brief the Soviet minister on the current situation, as had been agreed in a conversation I held with Dr. Eytan. The minister took sick suddenly (he caught a cold on the way back from a reception given by Prof. Dr. Ch. Weizmann) and the conversation took place with the counsellor.

I briefed him on the course of events, on our reaction to Britain's moves,[1] on the material we have against [Britain], which was made available to A. Eban. I emphasized the major differences between Britain's policy and that of the United States at this stage. I noted the Reuters report about the purported Soviet proposal to help,[2] and the like.

I explained that the English intend to thwart [the] cease-fire negotiations and the reasons which, in our view, prompted the Egyptians to make their positive decision in favour of negotiating with us.[3] I also noted, as a curiosity, the matter of the 'Jewish Authorities'.[4]

My interlocutor heard me out with great interest, took notes on my remarks, and stopped me several times with comments and with a whole series of questions. The following were the main queries, to the best of my recollection.

Had we in fact decided to submit a complaint against Britain to the UN?

What were our grounds for concluding that there was a rift between the British and American lines [of policy]?

Had the British consul-general instructed the English to leave the country, and what was the meaning of the conflicting instructions issued by the British government?

Was it true that we held captured British pilots?

Was it true that British warships had been ordered to alter their course and remain close by?

Had our press reported the false information about Ershov's proposal of aid or its denial?

Was there anything new on the part of Transjordan?

---

1. See n. 4 below.
2. On 10 January, several newspapers in Israel and abroad published a news item about a meeting between Ershov and Sharett, in which the former reportedly offered Soviet aid to Israel. This was denied the following day (see *Al hamishmar*, 10–11 Jan. 1949; *New York Herald Tribune*, 11 Jan. 1949).
3. Egypt was the first belligerent country to enter into cease-fire negotiations with Israel. The first official meeting between the sides took place on 13 January 1949, in Rhodes.
4. Reference is to the British memorandum presented to Israel on 8 January 1949, following a skirmish between British and Israeli airplanes over Egyptian territory which resulted in the loss of five British planes (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 2, No. 298, pp. 349–50). The Israelis refused to accept this document until the addressee's title was changed from 'Jewish Authorities' to 'Your Government'.

In the course of his remarks he noted that the Soviet legation was very appreciative of the information it received from us, even if it had already been published in the press, since they had learned that the Israeli papers were unreliable and jumped on every sensation. He had high praise for the operative skill that our operations personnel displayed in the latest campaign. He asked about the morale in our circles, whether it was resilient enough in the conflict with Britain. He said that he believed the UN would treat our complaints seriously, despite the fact that they were levelled against a Great Power. He informed me that he would convey the full details of the discussion to the minister.

Sh. Friedman

212
Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – G. Meyerson (Moscow, 19 January 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.5, LL.1–2
Secret

I received Mrs. Meyerson at her request.

Mrs. Meyerson came to see me after her return from a trip to Israel. In our conversation she said that the government of the State of Israel and the entire Israeli people were very grateful to the Soviet Union for the assistance it had given them in their struggle to create a sovereign state. In particular, the government and people of Israel thanked the Soviet delegates to the session of the General Assembly of the UN, where the delegation had refused to accept the Bernadotte Plan, which had been drawn up by the British.[1] In further conversation Mrs. M[eyerson] told me that, in spite of the tense military situation in Israel, a great deal of work was being done to absorb the immigrants now arriving in Israel. As an example of something which had clouded her stay in Tel Aviv, Mrs. M[eyerson] mentioned that the Israeli press had published articles with fabricated accounts of the supposedly bad conditions in which the Israeli legation in the Soviet Union had to work.[2] She believed that publications of this sort did nothing but harm. At the same time, M[eyerson] said she doubted the accuracy of the assessment of the the Jewish National Fund organization in Israel given by Genin, the author of a small Soviet brochure on Palestine.[3] She tried to explain that this organization was

1. For Bernadotte's recommendations see Doc. 174, n. 2.
2. See Doc. 207.
3. On Genin's brochure, see Doc. 217 and n. 1 there. The Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemet), was established in 1907 by the Zionist Executive in order to purchase land in Palestine on which Jewish settlements could be created.

not capitalist in nature, as the author had said, since the funds which it received for the purchase of land came from charitable donations by Jews from all over the world. But Mrs. M[eyerson] did not deny that the land in this organization's possession is rented out, and that people who invested money in the purchase of land received interest on their capital.

Namir, the counsellor of the Israeli legation, was present at the conversation.

Director of the Near and Middle East Department
I. Bakulin

213
Meeting: A.Ia. Vyshinskii – G. Meyerson (Moscow, 20 January 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.4, L.2.
Secret

On 20 January Mrs. Meyerson visited me for the first time. She was accompanied by Namir, the counsellor in the legation.

Mrs. Meyerson expressed gratitude to the Soviet government for its Palestine policy, saying that only two states – the USSR and Britain – were acting consistently, although they were pursuing diametrically opposite aims. Mrs. Meyerson then turned to the situation in Palestine, listing the successes achieved by the government of the State of Israel in the economy and in their immigration policy. She was confident that the State of Israel could easily reach agreement with the Arab countries if other powers did not get in the way.

Mrs. Meyerson then asked whether old people or children with relatives in Palestine would be able to leave the USSR and immigrate to the State of Israel.

I answered that such questions had to be given specific consideration in each individual case and could not be decided in general terms.

Mrs. Meyerson then asked whether the legation should give us a list of these people.

I answered that I could not recommend such a step and said that matters of this kind concerning Soviet citizens were linked with the renunciation of Soviet citizenship which, clearly, presented certain difficulties.

The conversation lasted 30 minutes.[1]

Comrade Troianovskii was present.

1. Compare Meyerson's report in Doc. 215.

214
I.N. Bakulin to P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.13, L.1.
Moscow, 21 January 1949
Secret

To the Minister of the USSR in Israel, Comrade P. I. Ershov,

As you know, the Israeli press has recently been publishing more and more articles and reports hostile to the USSR, which we rarely counter.[1]

At the same time, progressive elements and the broad popular masses in Palestine are showing a lively interest in the real situation in the Soviet Union, and in its foreign policy.

Questions of Soviet propaganda in Palestine are therefore very important to us.

The Near and Middle East Department considers that the publication of a bulletin by our legation in Tel Aviv would be an effective counterweight to anti-Soviet propaganda and would keep the Israeli public well informed about the real situation in the USSR and the views of our society on issues in international affairs.

Please send the department by the next diplomatic bag your opinion on this question and your specific proposals for the publication of this bulletin by our legation.[2]

Director of the Near and Middle East Department
I. Bakulin

215
G. Meyerson to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 22 January 1949
Secret

Called on Vyshinskii to make his acquaintance accompanied by Namir. He treated us warmly and listened [to our briefing] on the situation in the country. The conversation did not develop into a general clarification of *aliya* matters. I asked about permission for elderly parents and small children whose parents are in Israel to leave in order to reunite families. He replied that they are ready to discuss each case individually, but we should know in advance that every clarification would take considerable time, since every departure involves

1. See Doc. 207.
2. See Doc. 223.

revoking Soviet citizenship, which requires a special decision by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. We are preparing a few trial requests. Vyshinskii said we can contact him whenever the need arises.

Our flag was raised today in memory of Lenin.[1]

Golda

Editorial Note

THE ELECTIONS IN ISRAEL AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT

On 25 January 1949 Israel held its elections to the Constituent Assembly. The Israel Labour Party (Mapai) emerged as the leading party, winning 35.82 per cent of the votes; the United Workers' Party (Mapam) polled 14.77 per cent of the votes. The Communists – 3.51 per cent. The rest of the votes were divided among the liberal, nationalist and religious parties. On 16 February the Assembly passed a law establishing that Israel's legislative body was to be a unicameral parliament known as the Knesset. Prime Minister Ben-Gurion presented his new government to the first Knesset on 8 March 1949. It was a coalition government made up of Mapai and the liberal and religious parties. Mapam joined the opposition. The main ministerial posts remained unchanged, with Ben-Gurion – Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, Moshe Sharett (Shertok) – Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Eliezer Kaplan – Minister of Finance.

216
Sh. Friedman to G. Meyerson (Moscow)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2513/12
Tel Aviv, 26 January 1949

Dear Golda,

A few days ago we held yet another conversation with the Soviet minister. He was summoned by M[oshe] S[harett] on 21 January in order to receive information on current affairs. Most of the information was about the talks in Rhodes,[1] how they were proceeding and their content, and about the notification by the Egyptian representatives – in reply to a question by our representative – that they would make their own decisions and that recently they have

Doc. 215
1. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Lenin's death.

Doc. 216
1. On the cease-fire negotiations between Israel and Egypt see Doc. 211.

become increasingly bitter against Britain. We also reported the apprehension expressed by Eban at the start of the negotiations: that perhaps the Egyptians went to Rhodes not with the intention of concluding an agreement, but instead would insist on the fulfillment of the 4 November resolution,[2] and finally, the negotiations having failed, would make us look like violators of UN resolutions, while they had upheld the resolution by entering into negotiations.

The minister was informed that the withdrawal from Faluja would be through Gaza and not by the other route, which was more desirable for us, the reason being that the bridge on that route had been destroyed and could no longer be used. It was emphasized that everything that was, or would be, agreed at Rhodes would not be implemented and would be worthless until the [signing of a] general agreement on all the articles.

We reported concerning Lebanon, about the advance talks that were held and our demand that the Lebanese delegation to the negotiations present credentials from their government instead of the letter from the chief of staff with which they had come. We said that we had allowed the Lebanese to seize certain sites in the no-man's land, that we would evacuate the sites we hold only gradually, and that we would demand the evacuation of Naqura.[3]

At the start of the conversation we spoke of the landing at Aqaba,[4] about our apprehensions that the English had crossed our territory at a certain point, and about a confidential message from a very high Transjordanian source [stating] that the Aqaba landing had been effected without their consent and that they had been compelled *post factum* to announce that they had called for this action.

The minister posed several questions: were there political conditions on the American loan?[5] Here he quoted a phrase which had appeared in one of the newspapers – the payment of 'political interest'. He also asked whether the loan had been made in money or goods. To the first question he received a negative answer; to the second – in goods. He further asked whether one of France's conditions for the extension of recognition was the evacuation of villages in Lebanon.[6] The reply was that this condition had been rejected, since

---

2. The Security Council resolution of 4 November 1948 regarding the military situation in the Negev (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 2, Appendix C, pp. 623–4).
3. Naqura (Rosh Hanikra) is a coastal town on the border between Israel and Lebanon. The negotiations with Lebanon were preliminary and unofficial in nature. They proceeded smoothly, but the Lebanese, not wishing to be the first Arab country to sign a cease-fire agreement with Israel, awaited the outcome of the negotiations with other Arab countries. Official negotiations opened on 1 March 1949.
4. Reference is to the British reinforcement of their contingent in Aqaba during the crisis in the Negev. The British invoked their treaty with Transjordan and Israel brought the matter to the attention of the Security Council (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 2, No. 308, pp. 355–8).
5. On 19 January the American Export-Import Bank informed the press of its decision to grant a $100m loan to Israel. The loan was earmarked for agriculture, communications, industry and public works.
6. France recognized Israel on 24 January 1949 following protracted negotiations over the privileges of French religious institutions and the status of Jerusalem.

the matter was amenable to negotiations between us and Lebanon, to which France was not a party. Another question was why France was delaying recognition. After this a question was asked about the release of the Cyprus detainees[7] and about the significance of that act of the British government. The reply was that it was not clear whether this was the beginning of a change of policy or, on the contrary, an action meant to dissipate tension and thus facilitate the continuation of the previous line. It was said – while emphasizing that there was no certainty that the decision was part of the government's decisions on a change of policy, to be followed by de facto recognition, etc.

At the conclusion of the conversation M[oshe] S[harett] presented a character sketch of the British foreign secretary.

Shalom and regards.

S.F.

217
Meeting: Sh. Friedman – P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv, 1 February 1949)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2513/13

The main subject of the conversation was the various Soviet publications which have appeared recently: Genin's pamphlet *The Palestine Problem* and the report in *Trud* and over Radio Moscow about the elections.[1] I said that I considered this material to be hostile and that its publication had surprised and distressed us. It would be understandable if the Soviet Union had adopted a different attitude towards Israel. But in the light of the Soviet Union's positive attitude and its support, we cannot understand this. I pointed out that there was no basis for reports that we were becoming more closely oriented towards the West as a result of the elections, and that the foreign minister had already explained this in his interview with a reporter of the *Daily Express.* Nor should such such an interpretation be ascribed to the wave of recognition [of Israel] by Western states, since it cannot be viewed as something undesirable for the Soviet Union. After all, the Soviet Union, too, wants us to obtain recognition,

Doc. 216

7. See Doc. 167, n. 2.

Doc. 217

1. In the wake of the elections in Israel, the granting of the American loan and the recognition by many Western countries, Israel became the subject of many critical publications in the USSR. Genin's brochure, *Palestinskaia problema,* portrayed Israel as a bourgeois state with a nationalistic ideology. The publication in *Trud* following the elections (26/27 Jan. 1949) described the ruling Israeli Labour Party (Mapai) as bourgeois and quoted Mikunis, leader of the Communist Party, as saying that the elections had not been fair, many thousands having been excluded from the voting register (see Namir to Sharett, 13 Jan. 1949, ISA 130.09/2325/4; G. Meyerson to Sharett, 27 January 1949, ISA 130.09/2325/4; Ro'i, *Soviet Decision Making in Practice,* pp. 212–5).

as attested by its support of our application to be admitted to the UN. It is also wrong to characterize Mapai as a bourgeois party, as *Trud* did. Its activities are amenable to different interpretations, but there is no denying that it is a workers' party. I noted that in my view these reports emanated from sources that were misleading them. One of the main sources is apparently the Israel Communist Party. Proof of this is the reliance on Mikunis' remarks, not only in the report by *Trud* and in Genin's pamphlet, which mentions him by name several times, but even by such an important author as Erenburg, who also, in his well-known article,[2] based himself to some degree on that source.

At the beginning of the talk the minister asked me whether I meant him to convey its contents to his government. I replied that if he considered the reports in question as I did, as being inconsistent with the truth, I would be pleased if he were to do so.

The following was his response: He was not acquainted with the Genin pamphlet or with the author's name. In general, no special importance should be attached to diverse pamphlets which are published in the Soviet Union, and they should not be considered an official opinion. The pamphlet consists of the text of a lecture, and quite likely other pamphlets, containing other lectures, will also appear. To my remark that the pamphlet was published by *Pravda*, he replied: 'Well, someone has to publish it.' He then noted that our press, too, often published hostile reports about them. I said that we have to distinguish between our press and theirs. Here, the papers belong to different parties, or to individuals who set the tone of their paper, and no one is responsible for their contents. Frequently they are also sharply critical of our government, and as long as such criticism remains within accepted bounds it is legitimate within the framework of freedom of the press. But [in the Soviet Union] there is a specific line. To this he replied that this was a mistaken evaluation of their press, and as I am undoubtedly aware there are debates in their press, too, about various problems, in which differing views are expressed.

I remarked that one must distinguish between various articles published in papers on current affairs and the reaction to them, and a specific policy line, as was discernible in recent reports. Therefore, I did not consider it necessary to discuss with him what their *Novoe vremia* published in reaction to comments in some of our papers,[3] even if I did not agree with everything in that article, whereas their current publications were adducing an ideological basis, as it were, for our enterprise in Israel, one which it was difficult for us to accept. I reiterated that information about us and evaluations of our efforts should not be taken from the local communist party, whose real impact was made clear in the last elections. He asked how to account for its weakness. On this point I replied at length, noting especially that party's negative stand, from

2. See Doc. 168.
3. See Doc. 207.

the outset, towards our entire enterprise: immigration, defence, the state, infrastructure, and so forth. I said that it was a mistake to compare it with communist parties in other countries, just as there is no basis for comparing the majority of our labour movement with social-democratic parties. Speaking of our papers here which adopt an unfriendly attitude to the USSR, he mentioned among others *Hador,* the organ of Mapai. This was the most unpleasant part of our conversation. Finally he expressed his wish to see Genin's brochure. I told him that I would give it to him, adding that I hoped he wound not derive his ideas about us from this brochure. The minister heard me out attentively, and his secretary took down a record of the conversation.

He then raised a number of questions regarding the elections: an analysis of the results, and the reason for Gruenbaum's failure; he expressed astonishment at the failure of the mayor of Jerusalem in his own city.[4]

In connection with the first part of the conversation, he recalled that he had once told Eytan and me that he had seen anti-Soviet literature in book shops, and he was told that our government institutions did not authorize the funds required to bring in Russian books and films, thus reducing their importation to our country.

The second part of the conversation was devoted to questions about Russian property in the country.[5] He said that he was very appreciative of the speedy arrangement of these matters, [and] hoped we would do everything necessary to assist them in this area, referring especially to the property registered in the name of the tsarist government. I explained our position: the difference between the property of the [Russian Ecclesiastical] Mission and that of the Russian Orthodox Society, and our intention to enact a law which would determine the procedure for the [Orthodox] Society's property, whereas in regard to the mission the existing ordinance of the mandate government would be abolished, thus enabling the mission, effectively, to receive its property. As for the property of the tsarist government, I said that precisely on this point there are no difficulties and that they should clarify which property was registered in its name and inform us accordingly.

The conversation lasted a little more than an hour.

Friedman

4. Yitzhak Gruenbaum, minister of the interior in the provisional government, and Daniel Auster, chairman of the Jerusalem Municipal Council (Jewish sector) ran unsuccessfully in the elections on an independent ticket.
5. See Doc. 222.

218
Meeting: Sh. Friedman – P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv, 3 February 1949)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2514/1

In my conversation with the minister on 1 February 1949,[1] I was asked whether it was true that the United States intended to raise the level of its representation here to ambassadorial rank. I replied that we had not received any official notification to that effect. The following day, 2 February, an official proposal was received to this effect from the American legation, and we gave our positive reply on 3 February. I met with the Soviet minister on 3 February to apprise him of this. The conversation was brief, and I report it almost verbatim, as I remember it.

Opening my remarks, I emphasized that the proposal had come from the United States, without any initiative on our part, and I noted that the rank of the American diplomatic representative in three neighbouring countries was that of ambassador.

– And what, then, is your conclusion?

– We are bringing the matter to your attention.

– In other words, you will now have a different head of the diplomatic corps.

– It is up to you [to ensure] that it not be someone else.[2]

– It is normal for any state to propose raising the level of its diplomatic representatives, and then my government decides on this, having noted the request that was made.

– It seems unlikely that a small country like ours would express the wish that its representative be at ambassadorial level, but I am ready to convey your opinion to the foreign minister.

– That is not necessary, I am saying this in a private capacity. In any event, I will convey your information to my government.

– I would be pleased if you could also convey the tone in which it was delivered.

We went on to speak about our difficulties in finding enough people to fill diplomatic functions in various countries. He took an interest in the course for diplomats which had been conducted by the Jewish Agency, and asked whether we were considering the establishment of an institution to train people in this field. He said: 'You have plenty of worries now, you need people with much experience, with a broad education', and added: 'Of course, this wave of [diplomatic] recognition is important for you, but there is a difference between the recognition that is now being accorded, together with

1. Cf. Doc. 217.
2. The US envoy, known as the 'special representative', was beneath the Soviet minister in diplomatic rank. His elevation to the rank of ambassador would have made him the doyen of the diplomatic corps in Israel, replacing the Soviet minister.

others, and the recognition that was accorded immediately after 15 May [1948] and in the circumstances of that time.'

I asked him whether the reports that he was about to go to Moscow were true.[3] He denied this, saying that for the time being he knew of it only from the press, and he asked whether the rumours that Golda [Meyerson] was to be recalled were true.[4] I replied that nothing had yet been decided in that matter.

Sh. Friedman

219
Meeting: V.A. Zorin – G. Meyerson (Moscow, 7 February 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.021, OP.3, D.1, LL.75–6
Secret

At 19.00 hrs I summoned Mrs. Meyerson, to whom I made a verbal statement about the illegal activity of the legation of the State of Israel in encouraging Soviet citizens to give up their Soviet citizenship, and in distributing the legation's information bulletin to public organizations and individual Soviet citizens[1] (I am appending the text of my statement).[2]

Mrs. Meyerson was obviously embarrassed by what I told her. She asked me to repeat the first part of the statement, after which she hastened to answer that there neither was nor could there have been any intention of doing anything in contravention of the laws of the USSR. It was possible – she went on – that the legation had made mistakes, which could be explained only by its lack of experience in diplomatic practice.

Doc. 218

3. The Israeli press reported that the Soviet minister intended to depart for Moscow to report on the result of the elections in Israel (see, e.g., *Davar*, 2 Feb. 1949).
4. Golda Meyerson returned to Israel in the middle of February and at the beginning of March assumed the position of Minister of Labour and Social Security in the newly formed cabinet. Namir, counsellor in the Israel legation in Moscow, replaced Meyerson as minister to the USSR at the beginning of May.

Doc. 219

1. In October 1948, Soviet minister Ershov, informed Moscow that the Israeli book market was overflowing with anti-Soviet literature. On 30 October 1948, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs instructed Ershov to draw the attention of Shertok or Eliashiv (Friedman) to this situation (see AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.3, d.13, l.2). Following Moscow's instructions, Ershov expressed his opinion on the subject to Eliashiv (see Doc. 201). Then, in a telegram of 20 January 1949, Ershov reported that the Israeli authorities were not taking any measures to arrest the flow of literature hostile to the USSR. Subsequent to Ershov's telegram on 31 Jan. 1948, director of the Near and Middle East Department Bakulin suggested to Deputy Minister Zorin to invite the Israeli minister in Moscow and to convey the USSR's position to him verbally (see AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.3, d.13, l.3). However, Bakulin's proposal was not accepted and Zorin focused on other matters in his conversation with Meyerson on 7 February 1949.
2. See Doc. 220.

Mrs. Meyerson assured me that there had not been, and could not have been any cases in which Soviet citizens had been encouraged to leave the Soviet Union for Israel; there had been some instances of individual Soviet citizens applying to the legation for an entry visa to the State of Israel, but in such cases the legation had always explained that a visa could be granted only on presentation either of a Soviet passport valid for foreign travel or of an exit visa from the Soviet authorities. Apart from these, there were cases in which the relatives of Soviet citizens living in Israel had applied to the legation for visas for these Soviet citizens, but in these cases, too, the legation had forwarded the relatives' letters to these Soviet citizens, with a note to the effect that the legation could issue a visa only after the receipt of permission from the Soviet authorities to leave the USSR.

I commented that in the second case the legation had also behaved incorrectly, since it could not send letters directly to Soviet citizens, bypassing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mrs. Meyerson answered that this had occurred through insufficient knowledge of diplomatic practice, and she assured me that this would not happen again. Mrs. Meyerson also told me that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel, as well as the legation, received a large number of requests for help in contacting relatives living in the USSR, and that she, Mrs. Meyerson, had also received such requests during her last visit to Israel. She had rejected these. She added that the legation's searches for relatives were conducted through the Consular Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

As for the bulletin, Mrs. Meyerson said she would have to check on how it was distributed, but in a general way she speculated that perhaps the secretariat of the legation had automatically been using the list which the Jewish Telegraph Agency had compiled earlier for its own distribution. Mrs. Meyerson asked who was allowed to receive the bulletin.

My reply was that legations' bulletins were usually circulated to the diplomatic corps.

Mrs. Meyerson then asked if the bulletins could be sent to libraries and newspapers.

My reply was that legations' bulletins were not distributed to libraries and newspapers.

The conversation lasted 15 minutes. Comrade Pastoev was present.

Mrs. Meyerson was accompanied by Namir, counsellor at the legation.[3]

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR
V. Zorin

3. For Meyerson's report on the meeting, see Doc. 221.

220
Note Verbale by the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Israeli Minister in Moscow

DIARY: AVP RF, F.021, OP.3, P.1, D.1, L.75
[Moscow, 7 February 1949]

1. The USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs has information that the legation of the State of Israel in Moscow is sending letters to Soviet citizens of Jewish nationality, encouraging them to emigrate from the USSR to Israel and informing them that the legation is ready to give them entry visas to Israel.

The ministry regards this activity by the legation as illegal recruiting of Soviet citizens and as inducing them to give up their Soviet citizenship. We therefore propose that the legation and its representatives put an end to this activity, which is incompatible with a loyal attitude to the Soviet Union.

2. The USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also learned that the legation of the State of Israel in Moscow has begun to publish an information bulletin and to distribute it to Soviet public organizations, Jewish religious communities, Jewish collective farms and individual Soviet citizens in various parts of the Soviet Union.

The ministry insists that the legation stop distributing this bulletin, since it is incompatible with the generally accepted regulations on the activity of a diplomatic representation.[1]

221
G. Meyerson to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 9 February 1949
Secret

Yesterday evening was received by Zorin at his invitation accompanied by Namir. Zorin read out a Foreign Ministry statement containing two complaints against our legation.[1]

Doc. 220

1. In a letter to Zorin dated 16 February 1949, Bakulin wrote that the Israeli legation in Moscow had twice enquired (on 17 October 1948 and 19 January 1949) about a reply to the Israeli request to publish an illustrated monthly in the USSR. Bearing in mind Zorin's oral message, on 7 February 1949, Bakulin suggested not to refer at all to the above-mentioned Israeli notes (see AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.3, d.13, l.4). On 9 February 1949, Zorin sent the text of this oral message to M.A. Suslov, secretary, Central Committee of the AUCP(b) (AVP RF, f.021, op.3, p.7, d.143, l.1).

Doc. 221

1. See Doc. 220.

A. According to their reports our legation is sending letters to Soviet Jews urging them to forgo their Soviet nationality and immigrate to Israel. This is an illegal action and we must put a stop to it.

B. Our legation publishes a bulletin and sends it to organizations, Jewish communities, Jewish kolkhozes, and private individuals. This, too, exceeds the legation's authority and must be stopped.

I replied that it should not be thought that we had deliberately done nor would we do anything illegal or contrary to accepted practice. As for the charges:

A. Their information is not accurate. We have not tried to urge any Jew to emigrate to Israel, either in writing or orally. There have been cases in which Soviet Jews approached us with a request for an immigration visa and we replied in writing that we were prepared to issue a visa conditional upon their obtaining an exit permit from their government. There have also been cases in which Jews from Israel submitted a request for their relatives here. We then informed the relatives here that a member of his family was inviting them and that our government was prepared to issue an entry visa on the above-mentioned condition. To this Zorin replied that this was exactly what was forbidden. Such communications had to be conducted only through the Foreign Ministry here.

B. As for the bulletin, we replied that we were using some of the addresses to which the Jewish Agency had been sending material for years. Zorin said that the bulletin could be sent only to the diplomatic corps and the Foreign Ministry. This definition narrows and contradicts a previous conversation, in October, with the director of the Foreign Ministry Press Department and our note to the Foreign Ministry summing up that conversation.

The tone was polite and cool, the content of the printed note very sharp. Even the narrow wedge has now been closed. This means that it is completely forbidden to reply to a letter from any local Jew.

We asked for the text of the notification, but Zorin replied that it was not a 'note', only a verbal notification and therefore would not be transmitted.

Golda

222
Sh. Friedman to the Israeli Legation in Moscow

COPY: ISA 130.11/2501/19
Tel Aviv, 9 February 1949

Further to my letter concerning Russian property:[1]

Yesterday a conversation took place between myself and the minister and his counsellor, at their initiative. Its substance surprised me. They notified me that they did not agree to the process we suggested. As they see it, the appointment of a custodian (or, more correctly, a manager) for the property of the [Russian Orthodox] Society is a step that will not help them, but, on the contrary, expropriates the property and places it entirely at the disposal of [the Minister of] Finance. Their proposal: to handle the society's property in a manner similar to that which we intend to use regarding the property of the [Russian Ecclesiastical] Mission, i.e., to issue a brief ordinance annulling the mandatory government's ordinance of 28 April 1948, and afterwards they would clarify with us what should be done next. They also commented on various articles in our proposed ordinance to which they object, namely: the finance minister's authority to decide on the sale of the property, the limited responsibility for damages, the possibility that Russian Orthodox who do not reside in Israel (i.e., Russian émigrés) will also benefit from the property, and payment to the manager for administering the property. They raised these objections to the various articles in reply to my questions, and reiterated that they opposed the entire proposal.

They also told me that they had understood from Mukhin's conversation with Shapira and myself that we would only annul the previous ordinances without determining how the society's property would be managed.

I clearly told them that they were wrong and emphasized that our proposal followed the exact lines we had then discussed, and that in conversation it was our impression that they had accepted our position. I explained again the fundamental difference between the property of the mission and that of the [Orthodox] Society, adding that their proposal made no legal sense, since it left certain property, of which the ownership had been unclear for decades, in a state of chaos. I remarked that they themselves understood the difference between the two types [of property] and that it was no accident that the minister himself, when he spoke with B[en]-G[urion], in his capacity as acting

1. This letter, dated 7 February 1949, refers to the meeting of the Israeli Attorney-General Shapira and Friedman with Mukhin and Sergeev of the Soviet legation on 2 February. The Israeli side suggested appointing a custodian for the property of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society and the annulment of the British mandatory ordinance of 28 April 1948, thus enabling Archimandrite Leonid to become manager of the property of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission. On 24 August 1949 two pieces of British mandatory legislation were repealed: the Russian Property Ordinance of 1926 which had given the Jerusalem district commissioner custodianship over Russian property in Jerusalem; and the 28 April 1948 ordinance which had granted control of these properties to émigrés.

foreign minister, referred only to the mission and said not a word about the society. I said also that it was no coincidence that in recent years, since the [re]establishment of the [Holy] Synod in the Soviet Union,[2] they had not taken a single step towards regaining their property. There can be no doubt, I said, that even Soviet jurists understand the great complexities of this issue. I added further that we should not forget that these matters are related to Jerusalem, where most of the property in question was located, and that what they were asking us to do was not consistent with orderly legal procedure.

They remained adamant. I said I would raise the subject for renewed discussion, and we here would have to address the issue in the next few days. In the course of the conversation I discovered that Rabinovich had in the meantime taken an odd step, confronting us with a *fait accompli.* He had visited various sites with the Archimandrite, turned over mission property to him, and co-signed with him acts of transfer in which he described himself as 'acting by power-of-attorney for the government of Israel.'[3] During the conversation the minister gave me two copies of such documents signed by Rabinovich and the Archimandrite and requested that we confirm Rabinovich's signature. They confirmed the Archimandrite's signature on these documents.

We will inform you how we intend to proceed with regard to these documents.

They again raised the question of the tsarist government's property. I emphasized that with respect to that property the situation was clear; where mission property was concerned the annulment of the British ordinance de facto transferred the property to the head of the mission (the Archimandrite). The question is, therefore, relevant only in relation to the property of the society, and here, too, the action that has been proposed is solely to ensure the correct handling of the property. I said that we did not intend to use that property for the benefit of the state and that another possibility was that after a caretaker was appointed – in accordance with our proposed legislation – a way would be found to assure them that he would manage the property in accordance with their wishes. On this point I expressed reservations, saying that I was only 'thinking out loud' and that I had raised it only as a possibility and couldn't be bound by it. Mukhin remarked: 'So, you see, there is a way to reach an agreement.'

In his comments, the minister referred to the property of the tsarist government as 'the property of the royal household', whereas I consistently referred to 'the property of the tsarist government'.

---

2. For over 200 years the Holy Synod was the highest governing body of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Russian Empire. By a decree of 20 January (old style)/2 February 1918, the Soviet state prohibited the Russian Orthodox Church from owning property and confiscated its holdings. The Synod became defunct. On 8 September 1943 the Synod was re-established as a consultative body of bishops headed by the patriarch, but its authority was curtailed, particularly with regard to church property. The status of church property abroad remained in dispute.
3. These transactions were made from 28 January to 2 February. For other unilateral activities of Rabinovich, see Doc. 163.

All this is for your information. It is possible that they will discuss the subject with you, because I understood from the minister's remarks that it is of great interest to them.

Regards,

S.F.

223
P.I. Ershov to I.N. Bakulin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.4, D.29, LL.13–14
Tel Aviv, 10 February 1949
Secret

To the Director of the Near and Middle East Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Comrade I. N. Bakulin,
In reply to your No...[1]

The Israeli League for Friendship with the USSR, working, as you know, under our influence, is at present being reorganized and is beginning to intensify its activity. We therefore think it would be possible to widen the scope of our cultural propaganda by starting publication under the auspices of the League's Central Committee, of a large fortnightly illustrated periodical in Russian and Hebrew. In it we could give broad coverage to the real political, cultural and economic life of the Soviet Union, its achievements, its struggle for peace, and so on.

Part of the costs of publication will be met from the sales of the periodical, but we shall need a subsidy of about IL1,800 a year.

For the legation to produce a bulletin it would require a special employee, a translator and a typist. There can be no question of producing it without these conditions. For the Central Committee of the League to publish it, on the other hand, would be a more serious undertaking and would allow us to spread our propaganda more widely than publication of a bulletin by the legation; and moreover, it would be more expensive to publish a bulletin than a periodical. We reckon that the subsidy we have mentioned would be sufficient, but for the journal to come out regularly we would have to organize punctual and regular delivery of material and illustrations by air mail.

Please inform me of the authorities' decision.[2]

USSR Minister in Israel
P. Ershov

---

1. Missing in the original, but this letter is apparently a reply to Doc. 214.
2. On 19 March 1949, Bakulin informed Ershov that the Near and Middle East Department and VOKS would support his proposal to publish an illustrated bi-weekly in Hebrew and Russian. However, VOKS would be able to allocate only 900 Israeli pounds for this project (see AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.4, d.29, l.64).

224
V.A. Zorin to V.A. Sergeev (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.16, L.2.
Moscow, 10 February 1949
Secret

To the Deputy Director of the Chief Administration of Soviet Property Abroad attached to the USSR Council of Ministers, Comrade V.A. Sergeev,
In reply to your No. 1/1599s of 2.2.49:[1]

The USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs agrees with the view of the Chief Administration of Soviet Property Abroad that there is no point at present in starting negotiations with the representatives of the State of Israel about the creation of a joint shipping line to organize regular sailings between the port of Haifa and those of the Danubian countries.

The USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs has no objection to your proposal to organize cargo shipments between these ports in the ships *Tisza* and *Szeged,* which belong to the Soviet–Hungarian limited shipping company Meszhart.[2]

USSR Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
V. Zorin

225
M.P. Fedorin to Iu. Kosiakina (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.4, D.29, LL.17–18
Tel Aviv, 10 February 1949
Secret

To the Acting Director of the Near and Middle East Department of VOKS, Comrade Iu. Kosiakina,
In reply to your No. 180/s:[1]

1. I have to inform you that we consider it wholly expedient to organize a permanent Soviet exhibition in Tel Aviv. However, the practical realization of this project depends mainly on finding suitable premises for the purpose, and this, given the present housing shortage, would be difficult and would require

Doc. 224

1. In this letter Sergeev informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that on 31 January 1949 the trade attaché of the Israeli legation in Moscow, Bejerano, had visited the chief administration of Soviet foreign holdings and had had a discussion with the director of the Sea and River Fleet Department. Bejerano proposed establishing a joint steamship company for a Danube–Haifa line (see AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.43, d.16, l.1).
2. Following the war, the Soviet Union established joint enterprises with the Soviet-dominated East European countries. In most cases, the effectual management of these enterprises was in Soviet hands.

Doc. 225

1. Letter not traced.

substantial funds (for a space of about 15 x 6 metres, people ask for a down payment of £2,000–£2,500 and then a further sum of about £30 a month rent). If these amounts are made available, then we can start negotiations about premises.

2. I enclose a report on the two exhibitions – 'Upbringing and Education in the Soviet Union' and 'Military Capability in the Soviet Army'.

For the First of May we intend to organize a big exhibition of Soviet art. We believe that such an exhibition will increase the influence of Soviet art in the State of Israel. Therefore please collect a sufficient number of good exhibits representing Soviet art: pictures, sculpture, graphic art and so forth. It is desirable that it should be an exhibition of originals of Soviet art – pictures, graphic art etc.

Enclosure: as above.[2]

Second Secretary of the Legation of the USSR in Israel
Fedorin

226
M. Shertok to G. Meyerson (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/3
Tel Aviv, 13 February 1949

Soviet Ambassador to Washington Paniushkin invited Elath [Epstein] to a private lunch and spoke with him unofficially about the reports which have appeared in the American press on the possibility that Israel would join the Marshall Plan. He went on to say that they had no intention of demanding that we join their bloc, since they knew that the great majority of Israel's citizens were not communists, and their only wish was for us to remain completely independent of foreign influence and authority. Elath denied the claims regarding the Marshall Plan and assured him that we were determined to defend our independence and that we sincerely wished to maintain our friendship with the Soviet Union. Elath's impression was that the ambassador was instructed by Moscow to clarify the matter.

Shertok

2. In a reply dated 18 March 1949, the acting director of the VOKS Middle East Department Iu. Kosiakina explained that VOKS – for financial reasons – could not support a permanent Soviet exhibition in Israel (see AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.4, d.29, l.62).

227
M. Namir to M. Shertok (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 17 February 1949

The bulletin[1] was not sent to individuals but only to institutions, namely, government departments, editorial offices of newspapers, libraries and scientific institutions, to thirty religious societies and to three kolkhozes, a total of 140 copies.[2]

Letters expressing our willingness to grant entry visas upon submission of external passports were sent to eighty residents on the basis of requests from relatives, all of them on initiative taken in Israel or by local residents. About half of these cases were dealt with in January according to the list of the Ministry of Immigration.

Please correct the number thirty-forty[3] in my fourth report which Golda has, page 13. Regarding exit permit from here, freedom of movement of diplomats, contact with the local population, and other [examples of] non-reciprocal relations between the USSR and other countries, apart from distinctly exceptional cases: other countries do not take reprisals against the USSR. In my opinion, at the present time, we should proceed with great restraint in this sphere, even if you should find it desirable to speak with Ershov, in order to prevent any impression that we wish to violate the local practices. Golda is in the picture.

Namir

1. See Docs. 219–21
2. Original garbled. A detailed report by Namir reads: 'a few copies [were sent] to some large Jewish communities and to one or two Jewish kolkhozes' (see Namir's Fourth Report, 14 Feb. 1949, ISA 130.11/2415/15).
3. The relevant text from Namir's Fourth Report read: 'During the five months of the legation's existence, we notified 30–40 Jews that we were prepared to issue them entry visas, emphasizing that this was being done in response to requests by their relatives and was conditional upon submission of "appropriate documents". This formula was established by us after Mr. Levavi was told by the first secretary of the British legation there [Moscow] that in similar cases in the past they had acted in this manner' (ISA 130.11/2514/14, p. 13).

228
Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – M. Namir (Moscow, 28 February 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.5, LL.10–11
Secret

I received Namir at his request. He came with the legation's military attaché, Colonel Ratner.

In the course of the conversation Namir told me that that he had come especially to inform me about the signing of the cease-fire agreement between Egypt and Israel.[1] Namir read me a brief statement by Foreign Minister Shertok about the signing of this agreement. In this statement Shertok expressed his satisfaction that, after nine months of fighting, Israel had succeeded for the first time in signing an cease-fire agreement. The statement went on to say that the concessions which the State of Israel had to make to the Egyptians were not the last word on the matter and could be changed when the question of peace is settled. Colonel Ratner showed on a map the places which they had ceded to the Egyptians. The Egyptians retain a narrow strip of land stretching from the Egyptian frontier to the Mediterranean coast, and ending 10 km. north of the town of Gaza. In the Gaza area the Jewish troops have been withdrawn to Israeli territory. A neutral strip of 39 square miles has been established around the town of al-Auja, (near the Egyptian frontier). In this town there will be a mixed Egyptian-Israeli commission to supervise the cease-fire. The Egyptians, for their part, have undertaken not to station their troops on their territory adjacent to this strip.

This ended the conversation.

Director of the Near and Middle East Department
USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs
I. Bakulin

1. The Israeli–Egyptian cease-fire agreement was signed on 24 February 1949. For the agreement in its entirety, see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 3, Appendix F, pp. 688–704.

229
M.P. Fedorin to Iu. Kosiakina (Moscow)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.4, D.29, LL.23–5
Tel Aviv, 2 March 1949
Secret

To the Acting Director of the Near East Department of VOKS, Comrade Iu. Kosiakina,
Copy to Near and Middle East Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I. In reply to your V/No. 77 BVO of 18 February 1949:

1. The Haifa Technical Institute, or more accurately the Technion, is the main cultural centre in the city. It trains mostly architects, civil engineers, and mechanics. There have been no classes from the outbreak of hostilities to the present day, no work has been done in the Technion, since most of the students have been recruited into the army. However, the teaching staff was not dismissed. Many of the teachers there have a good knowledge of Russian, including Kaplansky, the Director of the Technion, who is president of the League for Friendship with the USSR. He resides permanently in Haifa and takes an active part in the work of the league's Haifa committee.

We think it would be a good thing to organize an exchange of books with the library of the Technion.

2. We should be able in future to combine various activities such as exhibitions, lectures, etc., with screenings of suitable Soviet films.

Unfortunately, we lack the necessary means for expanding these activities. In particular we do not have the equipment for showing films, or, indeed the films themselves (educational, historical, popular-scientific etc.).

3. The journal *Tel Aviv* is a specialized journal – the only one of its kind – published by the Palestine Foundation Fund.[1]

We can send you by the next post copies of some Israeli periodicals which are published here mainly in the Hebrew language (*Ivrit*).

II. We are still not receiving a number of the journals listed in the enclosure to our V/No.703/BV of 20 December 1948: *Arkhitektura i stroitel'stvo* [Architecture and Construction], *Tekhnika molodezhi*, [Young Technology], *Voprosy istorii* [Problems of History], *Iskusstvo kino* [The Art of the Cinema], *Teatr* [Theatre], *Sovetskaia etnografiia* [Soviet Ethnography], *Sovetskaia muzyka* [Soviet Music], *Sovetskoe zdravookhranenie* [Soviet Healthcare], *SSSR na stroike* [The USSR under Construction].

Please send us these journals. Please send two copies of *Iskusstvo kino*, and if possible, also two copies of *Voprosy filosofii* [Topics in Philosophy].

---

1. The Palestine Foundation Fund (Keren Hayesod) was established in 1920. Its major objectives were to raise funds to finance immigration, absorption, rural settlements and the establishment of public economic enterprises, in cooperation with private investors.

III. The Tel Aviv Committee of the League for Friendship with the USSR is planning to organize Russian language courses. Unfortunately, it is impossible to find the necessary teaching aids – primers, grammar books etc. in Tel Aviv. Mezhdunarodnaia kniga has still not delivered the 300 primers ordered several months ago by Boleslavsky's bookshop. Please send us immediately at least fifty primers and other textbooks for learning Russian, and some copies – even if only a few – of Prof. Ushakov's dictionary.

IV. For members of the league who give lectures on the Soviet Union, particularly Griss[?], who lectures several times a month, please send some textbooks on the economic and political geography of the USSR and a few atlases of the USSR, or political maps of the Soviet Union.

These members of the league have asked for the following: books on the teaching and theory of literature, B. Meilokh's, *Lenin and the Problems of Russian Literature*, and *From Heraclitus to Darwin*, vols. I and II. Please send these books.

V. Members of the former Spanish Brigade have asked us to help them get hold of various books on the Spanish people's struggle. They intend to publish a collection or periodical bulletin on behalf of the members of the former Spanish Brigade. They want to use the Spanish people's struggle to show the present need to defy the new warmongers and fascist-type imperialists.

I think that we should grant this request. Please send us the literature listed above.

VI. I enclose a letter in Arabic, addressed to Ode-Vasil'eva.[2] Neither the content nor the author is known to us.

Enclosure: as mentioned above (1 page).

Second Secretary of the USSR Legation in Israel
Fedorin

2. K.V. Ode-Vasil'eva, born in Palestine to a Christian Arab family and educated at the Beit Jalla Seminary for Women established by the Imperial Palestine Orthodox Society. She later worked as an orientalist in the USSR.

230
M. Namir to Sh. Friedman (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 10 March 1949

I want to express my opinion about Romania, Hungary, and Poland. There are no grounds for optimism, but I too think that we have reached a stage that requires a major discussion with the Russians pursuant to Sharett's talk with Vyshinskii.[1] Postponing this until after the UN [General] Assembly is justified only if there is concern that [by holding the talk now] we will adversely affect their support for our admission [to the UN]. The proposal for foreign minister's visit here[2] is feasible only on condition that we know in advance that he will not return empty-handed. During the time we have been here only ministers from the East [bloc] have visited and only for ceremonial signing of treaties. A visit by Sharett would arouse a great sensation and suspicion as to its political intentions, and should our political goal not be achieved we would be double losers. Therefore it is essential to first hold talks with Russians at Lake Success and in Israel and also perhaps through us here. If a positive tendency emerges we may be asked to submit a memorandum and the sooner it is prepared the better. Regarding all the [Eastern] bloc countries, in any event, only after a positive reply in principle will the time be ripe for a visit by the foreign minister to complete the task, as a finalizing friendly act. To turn to the Cominform seems to me a doubtful course; it should not be done by official Israeli representatives. It is worth trying Jewish and not only Israeli pressure on [Eastern] bloc ambassadors in all world capitals.

Namir

1. See Doc. 206.
2. Namir refers to a suggestion of Ehud Avriel, who paid a special visit to Hungary to discuss immigration possibilities from that country. Avriel's conclusion was that no progress was likely on the immigration issue through bilateral discussions with Eastern bloc countries and the solution lay in a direct approach to Moscow. He suggested a special visit of Sharett to Moscow and the Cominform headquarters in Bucharest (see Avriel to Friedman, 21 Feb. 1949, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 2, No. 395, p. 435).

231
M. Sharett to M. Namir (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/3
Tel Aviv, 14 March 1949

Summoned Ershov. Informed him regarding Romania episode along lines of my letter to Ana [Pauker][1] and asked that he convey our concern to his government. He tried to claim that they have nothing to do with it. I replied that perhaps Romania would ask for their advice, or that they might want to counsel Romania. I noted that Rakosi, in his talk with Avriel,[2] had shown deep understanding for *aliya*, and an inclination to seek a positive solution, but was opposed discussing it with Romania as this would signify that it was a matter for joint discussion and coordination. Ershov argued that every state had the right to prevent its citizens from leaving. I replied that if every country had taken the stand of Romania from the outset, Israel would not exist and the British would, undoubtedly, have continued to rule here. He asked polemically how we would react if Romanian emissaries were to appear in Israel and induce our citizens to immigrate there. I replied that such matters were determined by reality, and the fact was that we were a country of immigration while Romania had existed from time immemorial. The return of the Jews to their land was a decisive historical fact that brought about Israel's revival and obligated its friends. I drew a distinction between Russia and the rest of Eastern Europe, *aliya* having ceased from the former some time ago, whereas from Romania, Poland, etc., it had continued down through the years, including the war [years] and afterwards. I described the tremendous longing for *aliya*, the impossibility of suppressing it by police action, and the necessity for the regime to find a positive solution. In passing, I described the situation of our legation as a result of demonstrations, which we had no interest in promoting, but which we were unable to prevent. The authorities asked the legation to exercise its influence to prevent the demonstrations, but the liquidation of the Zionist movement[3] severed the connection between the legation and the Jewish masses. When the legation wanted to publish a statement in the local press it was refused permission and was forced to address Romanian Jewry through the Voice of Israel.

Upon hearing my explanation of the *aliya* process from Eastern Europe he admitted that he had not delved into the problem. When I expressed concern over the future of relations as a result of the liquidation of Zionism and its

---

1. See *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 2, No. 433, pp. 490–4.
2. See Doc. 230, n. 2.
3. Reference to a campaign which began in the autumn of 1948. Under heavy pressure the Central Zionist Committee curtailed the activities of the Zionist Federation organs. The last of its parties and youth movements were officially closed down on 4 March 1949 (see Yaffa Cuperman, *Bitsvat hakomunizm*, pp. 355–88).

vilification, he claimed that our press also attacked Romania, and the difference was that there they attacked Zionism and not Israel, whereas here they attacked the state. I replied that there they were vilifying Israel as being completely dependent on the dollar, and here we were only reacting to the vilification. He promised to convey [my remarks] to his government and proposed that he base himself on my conversation with Vyshinskii.[4] I concluded [by saying] that we were a stubborn people, that *aliya* was crucial for us, and that we would not abandon the subject but would continue to torment them. I said that undoubtedly you would continue [to do the same] in Moscow. I would speak with their [representatives] in New York and Washington, and it occured to us that it might be a good idea if I, too, were to visit Moscow for a very serious conversation. He did not react.

Sharett

232
Meeting: A.Ia. Vyshinskii – M. Namir (Moscow, 14 March 1949)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.4, L.6

At 12:30 I received Namir, who came on an official visit. He said that the government of his country in the person of Foreign Minister Sharett (Shertok) requested that he convey congratulations on my new appointment;[1] Golda Meyerson and he personally joined in these congratulations.

I thanked Namir for his congratulations. With regard to his remarks that the USSR and the State of Israel shared the common task of strengthening peace and international cooperation, I stressed that this was one of the basic principles of Soviet foreign policy. It had been stated 31 years ago by Lenin and was now being implemented by Generalissimo Stalin. I also noted that the USSR's position on the Palestine question was based on precisely these principles.

Namir promised to convey this to his government and added that his government had entrusted him with expressing the hope that friendly relations between the USSR and the State of Israel, which were so highly valued by the people of his country, would continue to grow stronger.

I expressed the same hope.

The conversation lasted ten minutes. Comrade Pastoev was present.

A. Vyshinskii

Doc. 231
4. See Doc. 206.

Doc. 232
1. On 4 March 1949 Vyshinskii succeeded Molotov as minister of foreign affairs of the USSR.

233
I.N. Bakulin to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.4, D.25, LL.1–6
Moscow, 15 March 1949
Secret

THE NEW GOVERNMENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL
(Brief memorandum)

On 8 March 1949, Mr. Ben-Gurion presented the Constituent Assembly with a new government of Israel, composed as follows:

1. *David Ben-Gurion* – Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence. Born in 1885 in the town of Plonsk in Poland. Active in the Zionist movement from 1900. Came to Palestine in 1906. Organized the Jewish Legion in 1918.[1] A member of the General Council of the Zionist organization. From 1927, secretary-general of the Histadrut (the Jewish trade unions federation). In 1934 became chairman of the Executive Committee of the Jewish Agency. A prominent leader of Mapai (the Israeli Labour Party, which is similar to the British Labour Party) and of the Zionists. In 1924 was in Moscow as a member of the Jewish workers' delegation at the agricultural exhibition.

In past negotiations with the British about the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, Ben-Gurion agreed that the British be allowed to have bases in the Jewish part of Palestine. He was prime minister and minister of defence in the provisional government of Israel. He stands for a strong foreign and domestic policy in Israel. At present he looks to the Americans.

2. *Moshe Sharett (Shertok)* – Minister of Foreign Affairs. Born in 1895 in the city of Kherson. Came to Palestine in 1905. Was secretary of the Zionist Commission in 1919. Graduated in 1924 from the London School of Economics. From 1933 headed the Political Department of the Jewish Agency. Member of the Central Committee of Mapai. For many years supported British retention of the mandate in Palestine.

In Mapai, Sharett, unlike Ben-Gurion, exhibited moderation, sometimes arguing against Ben-Gurion and insisting on moderate foreign and domestic policies. On Israel's foreign policy Sharett said: 'We have the right to hope that the USSR will understand that the State of Israel, being a country based on mass immigration and widespread settlement, cannot be created without the American Jews and the American government.'

3. *Moshe Shapira* – Minister of Internal Affairs and Immigration. A member of the Executive Committee of the Jewish Agency. Leader of the clerical Zionist party Hapoel Hamizrahi ('The Workers' Mizrachi). Supports the policy of the ruling party Mapai. Was also minister of immigration in the provisional government.

1. Collective term for the Jewish battalions which fought in WWI. Among them was the 39th Battalion organized in America, 1917–18, by Ben-Gurion and Yitzhak Ben-Zvi.

4. *Eliezer Kaplan* – Minister of Finance. Born in Minsk in 1891. Educated in the Higher Technical Institute in Moscow. Has been in Palestine since 1923. Director of the Finance Department of the Jewish Agency since 1933. Member of the Central Committee of the Mapai Party. Was also minister of finance in the provisional government of Israel.

5. *David Remez* – Minister of Communications. Born in Mogilev in 1886, has been in Palestine since 1913. Was in Moscow in 1925 at the agricultural exhibition as a member of the second delegation of Jewish Workers of Palestine. In May 1943, sent motor vehicles with medicines to the Soviet army as a gift from the Jews of Palestine. At that time spoke well of the USSR. Member of the Central Committee of the Mapai Party. Like Shertok he has moderate political views. He also served in the provisional government of Israel as minister of communications.

6. *Golda Meyerson* – Minister of Labour and Social Security. Born in Kiev in 1898. Arrived in Palestine from the United States in 1921. Since 1925 has been a member of the Executive Committee of the Federation of Jewish Trade Unions, and since 1945 a member of the Executive Committee of the Jewish Agency for Palestine.

After she was appointed Israeli minister to the USSR, Comrade Zarubin[2] stated that progressive Jewish circles in London were calling Mrs. Meyerson an agent of American intelligence.

Mrs. Meyerson is a prominent figure in the Mapai Party.

7. *Zalman Shazar (Rubashov)* – Minister of Education. Born in 1889 in Minsk province. Journalist. Editor of the newspaper *Davar* – the organ of Mapai. In Palestine since 1924. One of the organizers of the Mapai Party.

8. *Dov Joseph (Bernard Joseph)* – Minister of Rationing and Supply. Legal adviser to the Jewish Agency. Formerly military governor of the Jewish part of Jerusalem. Member of the Mapai Party.

9. *Yehuda Leib Fishman* – Minister of Religion. A rabbi. Leader of Hamizrahi, the religious Zionist party. Formerly held American citizenship. Was also minister of religion in the provisional government. In the present government he represents the bloc of religious parties.

10. *Yitzhak Levin* – Minister of Social Welfare. Leader of the religious party Agudat Yisrael. Member of the former Polish Parliament. Also served as minister of social security in the provisional government. In the present government he is a representative of the bloc of religious parties.

11. *Felix Rosenblueth* – Minister of Justice. A barrister by profession. Born in Berlin in 1887. Leader of the bourgeois Zionist party Aliya Hadasha (New Immigration). In the elections to the Constituent Assembly of Israel he represented a new so-called Progressive Party, which was indistinguishable from Aliya Hadasha. Member of the Executive Committee of the World Zionist Organization. Also served as minister of justice in the provisional government.

12. *Bechor Shalom Shitreet* – Minister of Police. Leader of the Zionist group

2. G.N. Zarubin, USSR ambassador to Great Britain during the years 1946–52.

Sephardim[3] (a group of Spanish Jews supported by immigrants from the eastern countries). Under British rule he served in the Palestine police.

Thus, the new Israeli government has been formed from representatives of the Mapai Party (seven ministries), the united religious bloc (three ministries), the so-called Progressive Party (one ministry) and the Zionist group of Sephardim (one ministry).

In the Constituent Assembly the opposition to the government will consist of deputies from the United Workers' Party – Mapam – and the Communist Party, on the one hand, and the reactionary Movement for Freedom or Herut Party, which seems likely to be joined by the bourgeois party of General Zionists, on the other.

On 8 March 1949, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion presented the government's program for the next four years to the Constituent Assembly. According to the press, Ben-Gurion said:

> The government of Israel will continue the foreign policy of the provisional government of Israel, that is to say, will rely as hitherto on upholding the principles of the UN Charter and on friendship with all peace-loving states, especially the US and the USSR. Israel will try to establish friendly relations with the Arab countries, to ensure freedom of immigration into Israel, and to support all measures taken with the aim of securing peace and strengthening the authority of the UN.

In domestic policy Israel's four-year plan of economic development provides for the expansion of widespread construction work, especially in Jerusalem and its environs, an end to unemployment, a guarantee of housing for new immigrants, a review of wage rates, supervision of prices and profits, and an increase in foreign trade by lowering tariffs. Furthermore, it is proposed to keep the system of compulsory military service; universal compulsory education is to be introduced; women are to be given equal rights with men, and so on.

After discussing the government's program, the Constituent Assembly passed a vote of confidence by a majority of 73 deputies to 45, with two abstentions.

Seeing that the new Israeli government, like the provisional government, consists overwhelmingly of members of the Mapai Party, it seems likely that it will continue, as before, the policy of alignment with America. However, since the State of Israel has a number of unsolved problems (the city of Jerusalem, frontiers etc.) in the solution of which the USSR will play a substantial role, the government of Israel is unlikely at present to take up positions openly hostile to us.

I. Bakulin

---

3. Sephardim – literally, Spaniards – is the term used to refer to Jews who trace their ancestry to medieval Spain. With the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, the large Spanish community was dispersed – largely to North Africa, Turkey, the Balkans, Italy and the Netherlands.

234
M. Namir to Sh. Friedman (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 18-20 March 1949

Continuation of my cable 118. Those pulling the strings: Sofronov, Simonov, Korneichuk, and Surkov. According to rumour and reading between the lines of the press it emerges that the Jews are refusing for the time being to confess to their sins and are making an honourable stand. Foreign papers including Israeli [papers] that have reached us and which deal with the reverberations of the controversy see only the literary side and fail completely to grasp the Jewish issue, which is the main thing. The diplomats here have jumped on the issue with great alacrity and are well-versed in the details. The Westerners predict the onset of official antisemitism and in the future also a deterioration of Russia's relations with Israel, as indicated by the attacks on Zionism. I dispute their assessments, which also reveal their secret desires. This is not antisemitism because that would be inconsistent with the essence of the regime and its policy on the national question relating to dozens of peoples and tribes. If there are now Jews holding high positions and there is no restriction on new appointments – which, it is true, are being made very sparsely – if the Jews prefer administrative positions and abhor physical labour, the government, after trying to help even through a state-initiated concentration [of Jews] in Birobidzhan, is not to blame. As for relations with our country, many other factors are liable to cause them to deteriorate, and Russian Jewry is at the very bottom of the list. My explanation is not more pleasant, but different.

a. The time has now come for the educated generation, comprising persons of all nationalities, with the Russians in the lead, those who were born during the revolution and were tested in the war, to become part of the leadership, which previously had drawn primarily on Jewish brains and skills.

b. A multinational state seeks to prevent the excessive concentration of one race, and certainly of a national minority, in the vital channels of influence and decision making.

c. The danger of a third world war, in particular, obligates reducing the influence of ethnic groups liable, by the nature of their alliances, to cross the border. Therefore, the Muslim republics, for example, are considered a weak link in the chain, and much is being done to strengthen [that link], albeit by other methods, which I will not elaborate upon here. The treachery of the Tatars in the Crimea has been punished but not forgotten.[1]

---

1. Reference is to Crimean Tatar collaboration with the German occupation administration during World War II. In 1944, the Soviet government exiled the entire Tatar population from the Crimea to Central Asia. On 5 September 1967, the Crimean Tatars were officially rehabilitated.

d. The experience of the last war has shown the effectiveness of Slavic and Russian sentiment, especially as a 'potion' with which to fortify the internal front against the West and the lures of its culture. That is what lies behind the tradition of preaching Soviet Russian material and spiritual superiority over the West, and the superiority of Slavic Russia domestically. The incitement of these passions has reached boiling point.

e. From all these points of view, the Jews engender doubts. The meaning of the voluntary return of all the Jewish refugees to Poland is clear. Just as they [i.e. the Soviets] are not certain whether the workers of the world will be a Trojan horse, so they do not believe in the possibility of gaining the sympathy of world Jewry in the current international situation. As for Israel, the most they hope for is neutrality and as such that it will perhaps influence Jews in general. With the signing of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact they were forced to remove Jews from the Foreign Ministry for opportunistic reasons of peace and not because of antisemitism. Now, with the possibility of war against the West it is essential to evacuate additional territories and fortify them with an absolutely resilient element. All this requires the reduction of the Jewish element and limiting [its presence] at the centres of social and political power.

f. The war and the Germans have raised and left behind them occasional manifestations of antisemitism, though these are not acute. The present controversy may also acquire antisemitic overtones on the fringes of society, whereas the Jews themselves see in it signs of discrimination and prejudice. In any case, the Jewish question is becoming more acute – it is the only one of the national issues here which has not been resolved. There are three possible solutions: [for the Jews] to move to Birobidzhan[2] in order to create a new Soviet–Jewish nation, or total assimilation, or [for the authorities] to permit *aliya*. As I see it, the first [two] are out of the question. Complete assimilation is impossible, and *aliya* demands a different international atmosphere; however, if the danger of war passes or is deferred for some years, they may attempt all three [solutions] simultaneously, only to rid themselves of this bothersome problem.

None of the above eliminates or detracts from the value of the literary controversy, which is important *per se,* since it leads to the same goal – strengthening of the rear. That is all I have to say. Nothing should be made public in our name. The facts in my previous cable should be made public, but initially abroad and not in Israel, and as coming from a non-Jewish source, lest it become known that we are their source.

Namir

2. See Doc. 3, n. 7.

235
Ch. Herzog to Y. Ratner (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/3
Tel Aviv, 24 March 1949

Your cable 9th this month.[1] [General] Staff agrees you should clarify possibilities of in-service training in Russia.

[...][2]

Herzog

236
S. Friedman to the Israeli Legation in Moscow

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/3
Tel Aviv, 1 April 1949

(a) Accompanied Ershov and Mukhin to the president before his trip.[1] A lengthy visit to the institute and a meal in a good atmosphere. The president stressed that it should not be inferred from his trip that he is a *Zapadnik*;[2] he is going to [visit] Jews as he has done seventeen times before and there is nothing new in his trip.

(b) Secret report and with reservations: Ershov told the Czech consul Necas: (1) He does not believe the assurances of our Communists as to the possibility of an eastern orientation here. (2) Directives will soon be issued to the countries of the [Eastern] bloc regarding *aliya*. (3) 'For important reasons' a number of Jews will be allowed to emigrate from Russia; not the masses, because for those who want a Jewish state there is one in Russia.

(c) In a conversation with me Necas emphasized a positive stand by Czechoslovakia on *aliya* and spoke negatively of Romania's policy. Details in letter.[3]

(d) Three of the emissaries in Romania have been released.[4]

(e) About seven hundred a month will be able to leave Poland.

Friedman

Doc. 235

1. Filed under ISA 130.09/2325/4. Ratner complained that the Soviets might be informed of Israel's attempts to ensure in-service training for Israeli officers in the US, ruining all efforts in the USSR of portraying Israel as a neutral country. He also asked why no attempt had been made to ensure training facilities in neutral countries like Switzerland or Sweden.
2. The rest of the telegram deals with a personal matter.

Doc. 236

1. President Weizmann was about to depart to the United States for a private visit.
2. A Westernizer.
3. See Friedman's report of his meeting with the Czechoslovak consul, 28 March 1949, ISA 130.11/2514/11.
4. See Doc. 231.

237
G. Meyerson to W. Eytan (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 8 April 1949

Forward copy to Herzog. General Seraev from the War Ministry in his conversations with Ratner displays great interest in military and political affairs relating to Middle East pact,[1] possibilities of military movement in the southern Negev mountain region, British control of the Aqaba–Ma'an railway line and northward which connects to East Africa in the event of Suez Canal closure, and our views on Transjordan. Russian [general] staff officer asked, on the basis of a booklet, about separation of the police from the Ministry of the Interior, Hagana, Palmah, party affiliations in the new border settlements, and various other terms. They were acquainted with the biography of Ratner that he commanded the Hagana, and was involved in organizing the Palmah and constructing buildings for institutions. Some of the questions were intended to ascertain whether we wished to remove leftist influences from the army. Ratner was asked to prepare a report of the experience we gained in the war against the Arabs. There is no doubt that the Russians are receiving much material from reliable agents in Israel.

Golda

238
A.Ia. Vyshinskii to I.V. Stalin (Moscow)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.4, LL.8–11
Moscow, 14 April 1949
Secret

Mrs. Meyerson called on me at 13.00 for her farewell visit. She said that she was leaving Moscow with mixed feelings: on the one hand, she was sorry to be leaving, on the other, she was pleased to be appointed minister of labour.

I congratulated Mrs. Meyerson on her new post.

Mrs. Meyerson then said that her government had instructed her to assure the Soviet government that the government of Israel had taken a firm decision to pursue a policy of strict neutrality, and that this had been approved by all the parties in the coalition government.

1. Beginning in March 1949, the Israeli and international press reported on Western proposals to create a Mediterranean defence alliance or pact, attached to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. See also Levavi's memorandum of 6 June 1949 (Doc. 246).

I undertook to convey her statement to the Soviet government.

Mrs. Meyerson added that now, when the whole of the Negev belonged to the Jews,[1] and there could be no return there of British troops, Israeli foreign policy was safeguarded and in a position to reject any attempt to create foreign bases on Israeli territory. Mrs. Meyerson said that she could confirm this with even greater assurance than before.

I asked if I had understood Mrs. Meyerson correctly, that the policy of neutrality was linked to a decision not to allow foreign powers to have bases on Israeli territory.

She confirmed this, adding that her country was surrounded by Arab countries in which there were coups d'état with unknown origins and unpredictable consequences; the State of Israel was interested in peaceful coexistence with Arab countries; therefore its government had firmly resolved not to join any groupings directed against anyone, especially against the USSR, since friendship with the Soviet Union was one of the foundations of Israeli policy.

Meyerson further stated that the large Jewish population of the US induced the State of Israel to conduct a policy that was friendly to the American people.

But despite the fact that the vital interests of the Jewish state require friendly relations with the US, the State of Israel intends strictly to adhere to the above-mentioned principles in its foreign policy and its attitude towards the US.

I noted that every state, especially a young one, must have firm principles and struggle to implement them.

Meyerson then asked the following questions:
1) whether the Soviet Union would aid the State of Israel by delivering arms or by accepting a group of officers for training, and 2) whether the Soviet Union would expand trade relations on a credit basis.

Meyerson added that the mission's military attaché was holding talks with General Antonov on the first issue;[2] with regard to the second, she said that trade relations with the Soviet Union were developing satisfactorily. More goods had been purchased in the Soviet Union in seven months than over the preceding years, but this was not sufficient. The government of Israel would like to develop trade relations further but had monetary constraints, which is why it would be desirable for the Soviet Union to extend credit. At the same time, Meyerson mentioned the loan granted by the United States,[3] and added that this had involved no political conditions whatsoever.

I said that I was not up to date about the negotiations with General Antonov, and added that the question which Mrs. Meyerson had raised was a tricky and complex one, which could lead to a number of difficulties.

---

1. On 10 March 1949 Israeli forces reached Eilat on the Red Sea, at the southern tip of the Negev, drove out Egyptian units stationed there and, in keeping with the partition lines drawn by the UN, established Israeli control over the entire Negev.
2. See Doc. 178.
3. See Doc. 216, n. 5.

As to her second question, I promised to pass on to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Trade the government of Israel's wish to increase trade between the two states.

Then Mrs. Meyerson said that on instructions from her government she was asking the Soviet government to support its request to the governments of Romania and Hungary to make it easier for Jews living in these countries and wishing to emigrate to leave for Israel. Mrs. Meyerson explained this interest in immigration by the need, first to increase the population of Israel, since this would help to reinforce peace in the Middle East, and second, to attract Jews from developed countries, namely the People's Democracies, which was important in the solution of social problems.

In answer to Mrs. Meyerson, I referred to my conversation on this subject with Sharett, the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs, which had taken place in Paris during the first part of the Third Session of the General Assembly of the UN.[4] I reminded Mrs. Meyerson that I had then told Sharett that this was a complex question, and that it was difficult for us to intervene. I added that I still held the same view.

At the end of the conversation, Mrs. Meyerson thanked me for the friendly attention which she had been given during her time in Moscow.

For my part, I wished Mrs. Meyerson success in her new post and also asked her to pass on greetings to Sharett.

The conversation lasted 50 minutes. Comrade Pastoev was present.

Mrs. Meyerson was accompanied by Namir, the counsellor at the legation.[5]

4. See Doc. 206.
5. Copies sent to Stalin, Molotov, Beria, Malenkov, Mikoian, Kaganovich, Bulganin, Kosygin, Gromyko, Zorin, Gusev.

239
Excerpts from Diary of M. Namir

COPY: ISA 130.02/2457/14
Secret

VISIT TO VYSHINSKII ON 14 APRIL 1949

On the first day of Passover we attended synagogue. Immediately after the reading of the Tora, Golda and I left, hurrying to Golda's farewell visit to Vyshinskii at 1 p.m.[1]

At the start of the conversation there was some confusion about languages. Vyshinskii opened in Russian and said with a smile:

'Well, then, they say you are leaving us.'

Pastoev, the secretary of his bureau, who sat next to him, immediately translated into English. It appeared that I would have absolutely nothing to do. But Golda replied in Hebrew. I translated into Russian. Afterwards, with the next exchange of remarks, the translation-puzzle repeated itself. Finally, after about five minutes this came to an end when Golda asked Vyshinskii whether he knew English, in which case they would need no translation. Vyshinskii replied that he knew a little, but preferred to speak in Russian; he asked his interpreter to stop and asked me to mediate between the Russian and the Hebrew. In jest he added that his secretary would monitor my translation...

The Soviet representatives' insistence on Russian was adhered to in all the official conversations and meetings we had here, without exception. A striking example was that of Vlasov, the director of the Consular Department, who visited our premises during the public reception on 9 April and spoke with Golda absolutely freely in English. However, when Golda and I visited his office a few days later he spoke only in Russian.

After a few general courtesies, including questions about Golda's tasks as minister of labour, the following exchange took place:

Golda: Upon taking leave of you, I shall take the occasion to inform you, in the name of my government which was formed after the elections, that we are determined to maintain a neutral foreign policy and not chase after any bloc or join any combination of states that is directed against any global element whatsoever or against the Soviet Union in particular. I have just had the opportunity, while on a visit to Israel, to take part in cabinet discussions, and I can assure you faithfully that our decision to maintain neutrality expresses the will and purpose of all those responsible for the administration of our country. We wish to reiterate this for your information and for the information of your government. We can now say more easily than we could

1. See Doc. 238.

before – having taken Aqaba [Eilat] and also holding the entire Negev – that we are resolved to preserve our independence and not allow the British or anyone else to establish bases on our soil.

Vyshinskii: Do I understand correctly that there is a connection between the two parts of your statement – on neutrality in foreign policy and prohibiting foreign military bases in your country?

Golda: Precisely so. I would like to add further. It is no secret that we are merely a tiny island among large, heavily populated Arab states. We greatly desire and are vitally interested in reaching an understanding with them on the issues that are in dispute and to ensure peace and friendly neighbourly relations with them, despite their reactionary political and social regimes, which do not change even after genuine or imagined 'revolutions'. However, to achieve this goal of peace, which is extremely important to us, we will not deviate from the basic principles of our foreign policy, namely: not to join in any alignment that is directed against the Soviet Union, since friendship with the Soviet Union is a basic premise for us.

Vyshinskii: I am very pleased to hear your clear comments, which are definitely in the spirit of our intention and our will.

Golda: I am delighted to be able to convey your declaration to my government.

Permit me to be frank regarding a different aspect of the same subject. Now, after the world war and the vast slaughter perpetrated against European Jewry, when we take the 'Jewish inventory', it is immediately obvious that the largest Jewish group, numbering in the millions, lives in the United States. It is needless to explain how many powerful bonds link us to the Jews of America. We are most interested in their well-being and in maintaining correct and friendly relations with the authorities in their country. This, too, is a basic facet of our foreign policy, but despite our sincere desire to maintain close ties with the United States we will not agree to any outside intervention in our domestic affairs and will preserve intact our independence and our neutrality. We are sufficiently realistic to grasp our true situation, and we are not doctrinaire, but there are basic issues of principle which we will not forgo.

Vyshinskii: Israel is a young state, and you have done well to lay down firm principled foundations.. We, too, were once very weak, and we would not have accomplished what we did, had we not uncompromisingly upheld certain basic principles, for which we paid a high price in human life. We certainly understand that in your policy towards America you must weigh matters with sober realism. We are also striving for peace with America and are therefore fighting the warmongers, but even towards the latter our policy is one of tolerance. There is no contradiction between friendship towards us and friendship with America. We have never been sectarian and we are well aware of the need for political flexibility, but without forgoing fundamentals. Our support for the establishment of Israel also stemmed from the basic principles of our policy, which seeks no material benefit.

Golda: It was precisely in this way that our nation viewed your stand from the day you first declared your position on our cause, and displayed affection and enthusiastic appreciation for the Soviet Union. It may be effrontery on my part if I say that there are some similarities between the great Soviet Union and our puny state in terms of existential problems and the struggle to realize their destinies. Ours is a coalition government, and there are even labour parties that are not party to it, but there is a workers' majority in the government and its aim is to build Israel as a socialist state.[2]

Vyshinskii: True, there are some analogies. I thank you very much for your remarks.

Golda: I am moving on to two subjects of a different nature.

(a) In the conversation of our military attaché with Army General Antonov,[3] we requested certain military supplies and asked about the possibility of a few of our officers attending military courses. We may be entering upon a period of peace with our neighbours, but it is our duty to be mindful in preserving our security and to strengthen and improve the capability of our small army. The issue of weapons was also conveyed to Mr. Bakulin at the time. I would like to ask you to look into this matter.

[(b)] During the seven months in which our legation has operated here, we have developed initial trade relations. Considering our size we have purchased quite a bit here, more than during the previous several years combined. We have been treated well by the institutions of foreign trade.[4] However, we are not satisfied with the level of existing commercial relations. We would like to expand them greatly, but there are limits to our financial ability to pay cash. We need considerable long-term credit. As you know, we have received a loan from America. We received it on a purely commercial basis, with no political strings attached.[5] Still, we do not wish to confine ourselves to America, but to maintain trade with the Soviet Union as well, naturally also on a long-term credit basis.

Vyshinskii: Regarding the military supplies: I am not familiar with this subject, since I have been constantly travelling around Europe for a long time. Apparently our military institutions handled this question. I will try to clarify the matter. However, it is clear that there is a complicated and dangerous aspect to this issue. Suffice it for us to give you a small pistol and it will be said that we gave you an atom bomb. Moreover, there will be no end of interpretations about the special dimension of this arrangement: an alliance between the Soviets and the State of Israel, which has one thing in common – Karl Marx, the socialist and the Jew; an alliance to attack and destroy the world. We have already heard some pleasantries about Karl Marx from McNeil

2. See Editorial Note, p. 430.
3. See Doc. 178.
4. Cf. Doc. 238.
5. See Doc. 216, n. 5.

and Bevin. The latter, I believe, only learned from us, in Paris, the terrible news that the grave and monument of this Karl Marx are located in the middle of London, his capital. But he was undoubtedly placated, in the end, since this is the *deceased* Karl Marx.

Golda: It is not certain that Bevin knows very much about the complex subject of Karl Marx.

Vyshinskii: Yes, there are various kinds of ministers, including some who are ignorant, like Forrestal, as has now emerged.[6] In fact it has turned out, in the meantime, that he was indeed a real *republican,* since he had no 'tsar in his head' (a Russian saying referring to a lack of intelligence – M.N.)

I return now to the military issue, which I will try to clarify. As for trade relations, we are prepared not only to sell, but also to buy. I will discuss the matter with Men'shikov (the new minister of foreign trade, replacing Mikoian – M.N.).

Golda: In conclusion, please permit me to trouble you with one special matter. It is not directly related to your government, but we are looking for different kinds of assistance in this area, and we dare approach you as well. I refer to the immigration to Israel of Jews from Romania and Hungary. The Soviet Union maintains relations of deep friendship with these countries, and we are asking you to exert friendly influence on the immigration issue. Our state came into being for the sake of immigration and it will live and continue to exist only providing that there is large-scale, rapid immigration. In spite of all the consideration for and sense of urgency regarding the immigration of Moroccan, Tunisian and Algerian Jews, we cannot rely on on these immigrants alone to establish our country. If we do not become stronger very soon by increasing our population and settling the empty areas, peace will slip away from us. There are half a million Jews in these two countries. Some of them (experts) are undoubtedly needed for their own economies. Let them remain. Some do not want to leave – let them stay. We can understand that a constant emigration process causes unease. Let a deadline be set, and whoever does not leave by that date will remain. But let those who wish and who are not essential to the countries' existence leave within a specified time.

Vyshinskii: You have touched on a very complex and difficult question. I spoke about this in great detail with Mr. Sharett (his name was then Shertok, but that does not change anything) in Paris. It was on a Sunday. Neither of us had any other work to do and we were able to devote sufficient time to the subject.[7] At the time I explained to Mr. Sharett why we cannot intervene. I well understand Israel's need for large-scale immigration. That is a natural need. However, you should know that Romania and Hungary are also young countries, and in fact they are still in the process of being reborn. They, too, place a very high value on their work force. True, in relation to Israel these

6. US Secretary of Defense James Forrestal, an advocate of a hardline anti-Soviet policy, suffered a breakdown and was dismissed by Truman on 28 March 1949.
7. See Doc. 206.

are huge states with large populations. But you surely know the proverb: 'The lord of the manor cares more for his *piatachok*[8] than the beggar does for a ruble.' But it is not just a question of arithmetic. It is an important political issue. Romania and Hungary are still fighting for their existence against very strong domestic reactionary forces. The Jews outdo all others in their loyalty to the new regimes. They suffered greatly from Horthy, Antonescu, Bratianu, and their ilk, and have a vital interest in the well-being of the new democratic order. Half a million loyal citizens is no small thing. I am not saying that the departure of the Jews from there should be prohibited absolutely and indiscriminately, nor am I saying this in the name of my government. However, I find it necessary to reiterate the reasons I gave Mr. Sharett, which I still believe to be valid. In any event, this matter seems to me extremely difficult and complex. We have both spoken frankly and undiplomatically, but I wanted to make you see the difficulty.

Golda: It remains for me to ask you again to reconsider.

I now bid you *shalom* (in Hebrew) and wish you all well. I have no words with which to express my feelings of gratitude for the welcome and the friendship I encountered here from all quarters. I will always view the period of my stay in Moscow as a special privilege which was given me and as a kind of compensation for the arduous work which awaits me at home.

Vyshinskii: I thank you for your kind words and ask that you convey my personal regards to Mr. Sharett. All three of us are now ministers and Mr. Sharett is our common acquaintance. You can also do this as a former ambassador *vis-à-vis* your former minister. Your stay here was very pleasant for us and I am happy to note this.

240
Statement by G. Meyerson

COPY: ISA 130.09/2513/13
Moscow, 18 April 1949

I am leaving my post in Moscow to take up my post in the Israeli cabinet to which I was recently elected [*sic*].[1] When I was sent to Moscow by my government to be its first minister accredited to the government of the USSR, I considered it a great privilege indeed. Since I have been here, I have realized even more the honour that my government conferred upon me.

Doc. 239
8. Russian 5 kopeck coin.

Doc. 240
1. Golda Meyerson gave official notice of her recall on 29 March (see her letter to Vyshinskii of 29 March 1949, ISA 130.09/2513/16).

In the course of my work here, I have had the honour of meeting ministers and high officials of the Soviet Union; they have all accorded me a most cordial reception. I shall always remember the profound understanding shown by them of many of the problems of our young state. It was my most earnest endeavour to further the development of friendly relations between the Soviet Union and the State of Israel. I sincerely hope that I was successful to some extent in this. I shall be very proud of and happy for anything I was able to achieve in that direction. I have seen many magnificent expressions of the culture and spirit of this great country of the Soviet peoples, and its outstanding historical heritage. It is not necessary to mention the deep impression one carries away of the art galleries, historical collections, the ballet, theatre and music.

It is impossible to stay in the Soviet Union for even a few months without becoming deeply aware of the tremendous constructive effort which animates the whole of Soviet society. Everything bears witness to steady economic progress and achievement. The healing of the cruel wounds inflicted by the Nazi invaders is only one aspect of this development.

The State of Israel was born in the midst of a defensive war of independence against almost overwhelming odds. It is therefore only natural that I was deeply moved and filled with admiration by the heroic story of the Leningrad siege, the signs of which I have seen there during my visit. What greater proof could one imagine of the determination, devotion and valour of a nation?

I gladly seize this opportunity to thank my colleagues of the diplomatic corps in Moscow. I arrived in Moscow at a time when most of their governments had as yet not extended any form of recognition to the State of Israel. Nevertheless, my colleagues went out of their way in order to be most considerate, friendly and helpful. I appreciate this very much and I thank them all.

I have learned much here and I consider my stay in Moscow one of the greatest experiences of my life.

Golda Meyerson

241
M. Namir to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 23 April 1949

Shapiro[1] United [Press] relates from France Presse that its representative in Tel Aviv cabled: (a) Golda was cooly received by Vyshinskii and received a negative reply on *aliya*.[2] Returned home because she failed in her mission.[3] (b) Ershov's trip[4] retaliation for delay in appointing our new minister here. Inform us re your reaction to the first matter and in general to the repeated fabrications which are intended to spoil our relations here. The detail about *aliya* shows perhaps leak from our secret material as our cable 59 from December. Is there any truth in the Ershov matter?[5]

Namir

242
Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – M. Namir (Moscow, 13 May 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.5, L.23
Secret

I saw Namir at his request.

In our conversation Namir told me that on instructions from the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he had come to express the heartfelt gratitude of the government and people of Israel to the Soviet government and USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for the support given by the Soviet delegation at the UN General Assembly for the admission of Israel to UN membership.[1]

I promised to bring his statement to the attention of my superiors at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[2]

Director of the Near and Middle East Department
of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs
I. Bakulin

Doc. 241

1. Henry Shapiro, United Press International correspondent in Moscow.
2. See Docs. 238 and 239.
3. It is assumed that those rumours were disseminated by the Soviet security services.
4. Ershov went home on leave to Moscow on 21 April. He returned to Tel Aviv in October.
5. Sharett annotated the incoming copy of this telegram as follows: 'It is worth cabling them the text of my answers at the press conference of 24th inst. about our relations with the Soviet Union...'

Doc. 242

1. Israel was admitted to the UN on 11 May 1949 by a 37–12 vote of the General Assembly. All Eastern bloc members supported Israel's admission.
2. Copies to Vyshinskii and Gusev.

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

DOCUMENTS ON ISRAELI–SOVIET RELATIONS, 1941–1953

Part II: May 1949–1953

ISRAEL MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

ISRAEL STATE ARCHIVES

THE CUMMINGS CENTER
FOR RUSSIAN STUDIES
TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

RUSSIAN FEDERAL ARCHIVES

INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES
RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

EDITORIAL BOARD

Eytan Bentsur (Chairman)
Evyatar Friesel
Gabriel Gorodetsky

Academic Editors
Yaacov Ro'i
Yehoshua Freundlich
Dov Yaroshevski

Boris L. Kolokolov (Chairman)
Alexander V. Saltanov
Pavel V. Stegny
Mikhail L. Bogdanov
Sergei V. Mironenko
Vitalii V. Naumkin

Translations from Hebrew: Ralph Mandel, Joseph Elron

Translations from Russian: Richard Kindersley

DOCUMENTS ON ISRAELI-SOVIET RELATIONS 1941–1953

Part II: May 1949–1953

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2000 by Frank Cass Publishers

Published 2019 by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Copyright © 2000 Cummings Center

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Notice:
Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Documents on Israeli–Soviet relations, 1941–1953
Part 1: 1941–May 1949. Part 2: May 1949–1953. –
(The Cummings Center series)
1. Soviet Union–Foreign relations–Israel–Sources
2. Israel–Foreign relations–Soviet Union–Sources
I. Israel. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
II. Cummings Center for Russian and East European Studies
327.4'7'05694

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress

Typeset by Marty Bokel, Tel Aviv, Israel

ISSN 1365-3733
ISBN 13: 978-0-7146-4843-9 (hbk) (part 2)

DOCUMENTS

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

243
Meeting: Sh. Friedman – M.L. Mukhin (Tel Aviv, 17 May 1949)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2507/8

At the minister's cabled request, I summoned the counsellor of the Soviet legation (in the absence of the minister he is the chargé d'affaires) in order to provide him with up-to-date information on a series of subjects.

I apprised him of the situation at Lausanne,[1] of the developments of the past few days, and of our general position in the wake of the minister's statement to the Knesset's Foreign Affairs Committee on 2 May 1949.[2] Apart from this [I informed him] about the stalemate in the negotiations with Syria,[3] about the Americans' grand plans for developing the Middle East,[4] and about the negotiations and agreement concerning the status of the British mission here and of our mission there.[5] While providing this information I also disclosed the conversation that the foreign minister held with a certain personality concerning Transjordan.[6]

I noted that we were not prepared to conduct negotiations at Lausanne with all [the Arab states] simultaneously, nor with all of them about all issues. As an example I cited Jerusalem, which we were prepared to discuss only with Transjordan, since the others had no claims upon the city, neither *de jure* nor de facto. I also emphasized that we would not begin talks of any kind with Syria before the signing of a cease-fire agreement, which would not be signed

---

1. Following the UN General Assembly resolution of 11 December 1948 (see Doc. 206, n. 6), the Conciliation Commission for Palestine convened in Lausanne on 27 April 1949. Israel was insistent that the refugee problem be resolved by settling the refugees in Arab countries. It expressed a willingness to assist in this solution within the framework of a comprehensive peace settlement. Israel further demanded that a territorial settlement correspond to the cease-fire lines, with the possibility of minor adjustments on a reciprocal basis.
2. Filed under ISA 130.02/2441/1.
3. Cease-fire negotiations with Syria began on 5 April 1949. They soon reached a stalemate on the border issue. Israel demanded a Syrian retreat to the international border, whereas the Syrians insisted that the cease-fire line be recognized as the permanent border.
4. Reference is to a scheme, attributed to George McGhee, special assistant to the secretary of state, to solve the Arab refugee problem. He recommended that Israel absorb 200,000 refugees and that the rest, some 500,000, be settled in Arab countries. The refugee resettlement was to be assisted by a massive development plan, supported by American and British contributions, as well as funds raised by government agencies, international organizations and private institutions. The UN and the Conciliation Commission were to have a central role in the execution of this plan.
5. Negotiations between Israel and Britain concerning the status of their respective missions went on for several weeks. On 13 May it was declared that both missions would be elevated to the rank of legation, but the British request that their minister be accorded a privileged status in the protocol, in spite of the fact that Britain had only recognized Israel de facto, was rejected.
6. Reference is to a meeting between Sharett and King Abdallah of Transjordan that took place on 5 May and dealt with the retreat of Transjordanian forces from certain sectors of the West Bank (the Kafr Qasim–Baqa al-Gharbyia line) and with promoting relations between the two countries (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 4, No. 15, pp. 33–77).

before they evacuated those of our territories that they were holding. Here I remarked that those territories, which are quite small in area, were of great value to us for controlling the water sources in the north. I added that from our point of view we were ready to reach an agreement in all spheres, including economic relations, and that it was not by chance that our delegation at Lausanne included an economic representative of the Foreign Ministry.[7] If we reached an agreement in this sphere, we would insist on reciprocity – lifting the boycott imposed on us by the Arab states – and we would raise the question of the Jews in those countries: safeguarding their lives, defence of their rights and property, the right to go to Israel for those who wished to do so, and the right to take capital out with them.

I noted that with respect to one problem, that of the refugees, we would probably not be able to insist on separate talks with each country, since it could not be solved in this way. I said that we might be willing to allow people to return for family reunification, but even in those cases it should not be assumed a priori that they would necessarily return to their former places of residence, which were now occupied by others. Their very return to Israel was tantamount to resettlement, and as such, there was no reason to prefer their settlement here over that in other countries. For our part, we were ready to help and contribute towards the settlement of the refugees in other countries. We would regard the abandoned property as liable to expropriation by the government (as in the example of the much larger Pakistan precedent).[8] We would be ready to recognize their right to compensation, but only for land, and for our part we would submit a counter-claim for war damages that were inflicted upon us. I noted Britain's aim of regaining its status in Iraq by helping to resettle the refugees using American capital, and thus profiting from both sides: helping Iraq and assisting the Americans' economic penetration of the East. However, the Americans apparently had other considerations and were not necessarily inclined to proceed through British channels. Here I informed [Mukhin] that the plan was to begin by setting up a committee, and afterwards a large company, to develop the Near East under UN auspices, with the cooperation of American financial elements, under American leadership and British deputyship, based on a comprehensive scheme which was supposed to include Israel as well. I noted that we had no inclination to be part of this plan. (My interlocutor showed a special interest in this aspect of my information.) Concerning the refugees, I mentioned also that we were under pressure to admit a large number into our country. Here I related Hare's conclusions: that there was no solution to the refugee problem in neighbouring countries if we did not readmit hundreds of thousands of them.

---

7. Gershon Meron, director of the Economic Division in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was a member of the Israeli delegation to the Lausanne conference.
8. The partition of British India in 1947 and the establishment of Pakistan produced close to 20 million refugees whose property was expropriated by the respective governments.

I dwelt especially on our relations with the various Arab states, on our readiness to arrive more quickly at a permanent arrangement with Egypt, for example, and our unwillingness to expedite the signing of a peace treaty with Transjordan, since this would mean full recognition of the Triangle's[9] annexation. I pointed out that Transjordan displayed the opposite inclination – to reach a settlement with us as quickly as possible – emphasizing, on their part, that they were ready to proceed even without the other Arab states and contrary to them. I enumerated the various concrete issues which we must discuss with Transjordan, in part in Jerusalem and in part at Lausanne, including the potash works,[10] the installation at Naharayim,[11] and others. I told [Mukhin] that Transjordan had a particular interest in Gaza and in a corridor there, that Egypt was ready to forgo the [Gaza] Strip because of the burden it represented for them (more than a hundred thousand refugees), and, in this connection, the special difficulties we faced in the strip, stemming from the same cause.

Finally, I pointed out the obduracy of the Arabs, manifested both by Syria and by Transjordan, in the form of new and inordinate demands which were raised upon the resumption of the Border Commission talks in Jerusalem. I added that the Arab states were inclined to act jointly at Lausanne – unity under Anglo-American pressure – and described Egypt's surprising deviation from this line, as expressed in their agreement to enter into discussions on various issues, provided we issued a declaration of principle regarding the refugees. My interlocutor was interested to hear our explanation for the rigid position I had noted, and about Britain's role in these developments. I also told him of Palestinian Arabs who, in the past, had opposed the mufti and who did not accept the annexation of the Triangle to Transjordan – they seek to establish a small, autonomous Arab entity in that territory – and about the group's appearance at Lausanne.

Towards the close of the conversation I raised the issue of the loan which we would like to receive from them. I quoted an appropriate passage from the minutes of G[olda] M[eyerson]'s conversation with Vyshinskii.[12] Mukhin told me that our finance minister had spoken to him about the matter. The subject had been a surprise to him. I asked him how he thought it could be achieved, and he replied that it would be best if our legation in Moscow were to conduct negotiations with his government and submit the relevant material and our proposals. In this connection I said that in various spheres we would like to maintain identical relations with them as with the Western bloc, and I cited as an example military courses for our young officers. I said that these might be

---

9. The West Bank.
10. The potash plant in the northern part of the Dead Sea fell into Arab hands with the outbreak of hostilities; most of its equipment was looted or destroyed.
11. The Naharayim hydroelectric power plant south of the Sea of Galilee, most of which was outside the international border of Palestine, ceased operation after the beginning of the war.
12. See Doc. 239.

arranged for us in the United States and that we would very much like to have the same opportunity in Moscow.[13] He remarked that without doubt there was much to learn from them in this area.

Finally Mukhin raised – as in some of our previous conversations with him and with the minister – the question of Russian property [in Israel]; he asked us to expedite an arrangement, citing examples of the consequences of its absence, which they found distressing. I explained the matter to him again: that the proposal to annul the ordinances from the mandate period had already been submitted to the government by the Legal Division, and that once they were annulled we would resume the discussion and seek an arrangement.

The conversation lasted for about an hour and a quarter.

Sh. Friedman

244
M. Namir to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 2 June 1949

a) In the past three months our commercial activity here has effectively come to a halt due mainly to a shortage of foreign currency. It is my duty to warn that should this situation persist it could have a negative political impact. It is essential to make an effort to renew trade relations, which had a very significant beginning. Only thus is there a prospect of achieving a trade treaty on a reciprocal basis, and perhaps also credit on easy terms. I ask that you take special care to set aside for the USSR a portion of the pounds that are being unfrozen in England[1] or to ensure [a supply of] foreign currency by some other means.

b) The same applies to the military attaché. In my letter of 9 May to Friedman[2] I warned against the thought of eliminating the position and I explained the reasons for filling Ratner's place[3] without a lengthy break. They are sensitive to these matters here. I request a reply.[4]

Namir

Doc. 243

13. See Doc. 235, and n. 1 there.

Doc. 244

1. Reference is to the British–Israeli negotiations on the release of sterling deposits of the Palestine government frozen during World War II.
2. Letter not traced.
3. Ratner terminated his duties in Moscow on 27 June 1949.
4. No reply to this telegram has been traced. Ratner was replaced by Colonel Yisrael Barnea.

245
M. Namir to Sh. Friedman (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2500/13A
Moscow, 5 June 1949
Private and Secret

To Sh. Friedman, Shalom,

Re your letter on the friendship league (no. 11351 undated):[1] I understand well our colleagues' inclination to leave that body which, in its present form, from time to time also takes pains to foster enmity for Israel, based on the pernicious assumption that this is the way to win over the Soviet Union for the Israel of 'tomorrow'.

I opposed the league's establishment at the time, and I continue to think that it was a serious mistake. However, it is essential to differentiate between a priori and *post factum.* I am afraid that our leaving will be harmful because, at the inspiration of leftist propaganda in Israel there will be all manner of malicious interpretations here, without any opportunity to explain the real reasons. In any event, this issue should be considered thoroughly and haste avoided. As far as I am concerned, I would advise against leaving now. On the other hand, as long as the current situation persists it seems to me that our colleagues, and especially those who are prominent figures, must, on official, public occasions initiated by the league, criticize its aim from the platform, openly and sharply, *in the presence of the Russians,* as being sectarian and fomenting tension between the USSR and Israel – that is, in the final analysis, that it will lead to undermining sympathy for the Soviet Union in Israel. I do not delude myself that this is an easy matter, but I find it preferable to the negative act of leaving.

Here, from afar, I sometimes have the impression that when it comes to Russia and communism, our party's[2] behaviour is altogether the opposite of what is needed. In my view, we are duty-bound, in our official foreign policy, *to be generous* with our acknowledgement, praise and expressions of friendship for the Soviet Union, [and we should] be wary of causing offense, strive to expand the trade relations that have been set in motion, and not shut the door as well on the opportunity of cultural and social relations, even if they appear remote at this time of the renewal of anti-Zionist reaction in the Eastern bloc. I am afraid that we have not done our duty in this regard, if we take into account the very many official occasions on which we have expressed our appreciation to the United States. There is no doubt that the causes of this are the Russians' own diplomatic rigidity and social insularity. However, we must act *within the framework of existing circumstances* in order to avoid the

1. This letter not traced.
2. That is, the Mapai Party.

impression of being one-sided in our public appearances and we must be meticulous about giving 'equal treatment'. I would not say that we do not refer to the Soviet Union positively, but it is almost always done simultaneously with an expression of thanks to the United States, and not vice versa. Perhaps you do not sense this. We here have managed to develop a special sensitivity to these imponderables, and I think you can rely on us in this matter.

On the other hand, on the domestic front I do not understand the molly-coddling, defensive and apologetic line *towards Mapam* that I sense in our press. Let me stress: *Mapam*, because we will be doing an injustice that will have the gravest consequences for the objective truth and for the education of this generation domestically, if *we* differentiate between them and Maki on the main issue. I do not claim that there are no concrete differences between them in very important areas, nor do I suspect Mapam of not being Zionist. However, *since* the state's establishment the previous criteria for delimiting the differences between us and our domestic rivals – as opposed to what differentiates us from our opponents of other social classes – Zionist and anti-Zionist are no longer adequate. In a *world divided* into two blocs, with our state, which is situated in a geopolitical hot-spot, endeavouring with all its might to maintain *neutrality* as far as it possibly can – foreign policy issues, in the final analysis, are also what *determine* domestic inter-party relations, at least for the foreseeable future. Therefore, we, like them, will not refrain from seeking political allies, for example, even among the *Arabs*, who are under no obligation of loyalty to Zionism or of membership in the World Zionist Organization, beyond their loyalty to the State of Israel. Yet, precisely in foreign policy Mapam is no different from Maki, both calling openly for a unilateral eastern orientation. This, *and not Mapam's non-participation* in the government, is the root of that miserable ideology of two homelands. To one of them, the true one, it is ready to grant a priori indulgence for all its actions: dictatorship, abrogation of freedoms, imperialist expansion, transfer of whole nations, low wages and piece-work, anti-Zionism, anti-Hebraism (and now no Yiddish either) to the point of forgiving the eradication of the form and image of Russia's Jews altogether. But for the second homeland, the step-homeland, *as long as it has not been swallowed whole by the influence of the first* – not a drop of affection or mercy, no matter how difficult its straits. Let not the glory of their agricultural kibbutzim and their fallen comrades on the field of battle mislead and confuse us. Certainly large numbers of their rank and file work faithfully, sincerely, and with devotion to the cause itself, but it is not they who set policy. It is set by the senior leaders, who are for the most part *'communist' in relation to the crucial political principle in this period of mankind's history*, and they direct the kibbutzim and the Palmah[3] and others towards one

3. The Palmah, an élite corps, which took a leading part in the early phases of the 1948 war and which was closely allied with Hakibbutz Hameuhad and Mapam, was officially dissolved in November 1948 and incorporated into the Israel Defence Forces.

goal – to enfeeble the shaky Israeli state rule that exists in practice, that is, to endanger the very existence of the state as an *independent Jewish* realm.

It is a waste of time to contemplate this spectacle in psychological terms. Whatever the reasons for its development, this is the situation as it is. *Their participation in the government will not improve their behaviour by one iota.* If they now do serious damage merely in the opposition, the situation will be aggravated still further when they are in the government. In my view, in matters relating to the Soviet Union and its neighbours the time is fast approaching when certain people [and their leaders][4] are liable to lose something of their sensitivity and their serious attitude even towards civil loyalty (strict silence as to state and military secrets, refraining from conducting a clandestine or overt separatist foreign policy, and so forth). Nor can it be ignored that the very fact that they have been invited to [join the] government, following their unruliness, can only be construed as a moral and political victory for them.

Thus I return to my impression that the party is doing the opposite of what is needed. Not only does *our press* not exhibit enough explicit and consistent fondness for the Soviet Union, it also frequently permits itself attacks and sideswipes and scorn even in matters that have no vital bearing upon us as Jews. In contrast, there is no aggressive domestic anti-'communist' line (Mapam). There is abhorrence and a bitter, defensive controversy, but there is no *aggressiveness*, which is the only way to immunize the public against this dangerous pestilence, to create around it an atmosphere of total isolation, and to generate a process of radical change among Mapam's rank-and-file membership. We continue with our ideological disorientation, fostering our illusions as though in the near future labour unity can be expected or is possible without paying the price of worshipping 'Marxism–Leninism' (the collapse of Pietro Nenni[5] – the Italian Mapam – into the arms of the Cominform is forgotten), and the Mapam leadership is invited to join the government as though they were *fair* rivals, and by this they qualify, in the eyes of their party members and the general public, as a [party] that will eventually be fit to hold power.

A stern and severe line against Mapam (and Herut as well; Maki does not represent a concrete danger and can be left alone for the time being) will not influence the fate of our external relations with the Soviet Union – relations which in themselves require a greater emphasis on friendship and more generous official attention *on our part* – whereas the division of our sympathy unequally between the two blocs, or tactlessness, not to mention manifestations of anti-Soviet hostility, will not be forgiven even at the price of the return of Bentov and Ziesling[6] to their ministerial portfolios. As for TASS

4. Original unclear; this addition is conjectural.
5. Pietro Nenni, the Italian socialist statesman, led his party out of the governing coalition in Italy in 1947 and joined the communists under Palmiro Togliatti.
6. Aharon Ziesling, like Mordechai Bentov, was a member of Mapam, who had held a ministerial post in the provisional government (see Doc. 161, no. 5).

and the Soviet press – they will continue in one way or another to distort in Mikunis-style[7] and attack our regime and our domestic affairs as long as we have not become a true People's Democracy, just as they did during the period when Mapam was in the government and even in the most romantic days of their political support and sympathy for our military struggle.

Even from this general point of view, as described above, the idea of leaving the V League at this time is far from appealing.

Sincerely,

M. Namir

P.S. I must stress that all my impressions come from the press, mainly the daily press. If there are unseen processes at work, which might contradict my train of thought (certainly the thoughts of a small minority in our camp), they are not apparent to me and I can not take them into account.

M.N.

246
Memorandum by A. Levavi

COPY: ISA 130.11/2514/15
Moscow, 6 June 1949[1]
Secret/By Courier

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND ISRAEL

1. With Israel's admission to the United Nations the problem of formulating Israeli policy in international affairs and of adopting the appropriate diplomatic tactics will become more acute. It behooves us, then, to outline a few assumptions connected with this issue, as they might appear to an Israeli observer in the Soviet Union.

2. The major result of World War II in the sphere of global politics is that for the first time in history a certain balance of forces has been created between the states which are ruled by communist parties and those which are governed by non-communist political elements.

This balance of forces is manifested in the following facts:

(a) The Soviet Union has an advantage in land forces, while the non-communist powers maintain an advantage in naval and air forces.

Doc. 245
7. Shmuel Mikunis, secretary-general of the Israeli Communist Party.

Doc. 246
1. The memorandum was written over a period of several months. See appendices.

(b) Great superiority in manufacturing capability among the non-communist powers; a more rapid rate of growth of manufacturing capability in the communist states. Good socio-economic prospects for the communist states to achieve a stable standard of living in the near future; true, that standard will be lower in terms of the supply of industrial consumer goods than that of various Western states, but it will certainly suffice to enable the subsistence, expansion and development of a population which possesses individual, and especially collective, capabilities comparable to those of Western peoples.

(c) In the communist countries there is complete centralization of government rule and of political–cultural influence – and this is one of the reasons why their regimes should be considered to be completely stable in peacetime.

3. The October Revolution was a result of World War I. The consolidation of communist rule in the People's Democracies was the result of three factors, all of them related to World War II: (a) the collapse of the previous regimes following their defeat (Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania); (b) occupation by the Soviet army; (c) the role played by the local communist movements in the war against Nazism. On the other hand, the substance of the new international balance of power is that no war between powers is conceivable without Soviet participation. The Soviet Union's allies will consist exclusively of its satellite communist states which can not be counted among the Great Powers. Germany and Japan will not return to being independent, first-rank military powers in the near future, while a war among the Western powers themselves is not possible. A war between the communist and non-communist countries could in fact expand the sphere of influence of the communist parties, yet there is no doubt that in view of the existing international balance of forces the Soviet leaders will not choose war as a means to extend their sphere. Should the choice be between freezing the [present] bounds of communist political rule and non-communist stabilization west of those bounds, or a war between the powers, the Soviet Union will choose peace.

4. Another question is how the Soviet Union might react to a reassertion of strength by West Germany and Japan (and, to a lesser degree, Italy) as allies of the United States. The issue of Germany is extremely serious for the security of Poland and Czechoslovakia. The potential of the Ruhr alone (especially the region's steel production capacity) is a factor that may profoundly affect the balance of forces in Europe. The absence of a solution to the German problem is one of the factors that is bound to prevent the elimination of constant tension between the communist and non-communist worlds. The following are other basic factors that are operating to maintain and deepen the gulf between the two systems:

(a) The communist world-view rejects every other social regime in any country. This world-view serves as an educational and ideological basis in all the countries of the Eastern bloc. It does not follow from this that there must be a war of aggression with the aim of establishing communist regimes in countries where other regimes exist. However, this approach does require

sympathy and assistance for every class or [anti-]colonial struggle which might hasten revolutionary change and a communist takeover. The civil war in Greece, the separatist attempt of Iranian Azerbaijan and the civil war in China illustrate the Russian methods of operation beyond the borders of the Communist Party's state rule, with the focus being more on acquiring new spheres of influence and less on consolidating positions that are in jeopardy. One must acknowledge that the intervention is very cautious and restrained, yet concrete and quite effective.

(b) In large areas of the world the existing non-communist regimes are far from stable. Here we should mention especially South Asia (Indo-China, Malaya, Burma). In all these countries the communist movement is striving to transform nationalist sentiment, which is developing against a background of foreign oppression combined with poverty and social injustice, into a revolutionary process fomented by communist parties.

(c) The possibility of an economic crisis in the United States or of a serious disruption in the process of rehabilitating Western Europe.

(d) Fear of communist expansion prevalent in one form or another in many social classes in the West. Fear of being encircled and attacked by an imperialist coalition, which constitutes one of the foundations of Soviet foreign policy.

5. Whereas the fate of China has in effect been sealed and tensions in South Asia are intensifying, the consolidation of non-communist forces is progressing in an arc extending along the Japanese islands, Formosa, Ceylon, India, and Pakistan. As a result, the Middle and Near East are for the present isolated from revolutionary developments in Central and South Asia. Nevertheless, this is a region where tension between communist and non-communist forces is bound to increase in the near future. The region borders on the Soviet sphere of influence in the Balkans and on the Soviet Union in an area of extreme strategic sensitivity (Baku). The western border of the Middle East is the Mediterranean Sea, where the Western powers are fortifying a number of islands as bases for offensive operations in case of war. The Middle East contains large oil reserves, and oil is one of the raw materials that is produced in relatively small quantities in the area of Soviet influence. Additional points could be adduced, but they are not likely to change our conclusions regarding the geopolitical situation in the Middle East:

(a) The region is an Anglo-American sphere of influence.

(b) The region is underdeveloped economically, socially, politically and militarily.

(c) There is no national-revolutionary ferment in the region like that in the China–South Asia region.

(d) The region borders on important and sensitive areas of the Soviet sphere of influence.

In light of the basic contradiction between communist and non-communist policy, additional conclusions follow from the above:

(i) The Soviet Union does not currently foresee the possibility in the

near future of infiltrating the Middle East as it does regarding other regions bordering on its sphere of influence.

(ii) The Soviet Union wishes to impede as far as possible the region's development by the Western powers in order to ensure that it does not become a firm, potent, and dangerous base *vis-à-vis* the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea.

(iii) There is very little danger of an armed conflict between the two global blocs erupting as a result of events along the northern boundaries of the Mediterranean region. There is no fear of a world war being triggered by developments of any sort in the interior of the Middle East region.

(iv) In the event of war, the Middle East will immediately become a theatre of combat, a front, and an area of forward bases that will be second in importance only to Central and Western Europe. This state of affairs is clear to the political leaders and the high commands of the Western powers.

We should, then, expect heightened efforts by the West to organize and consolidate the Middle East economically, politically and also militarily. Soviet efforts in the Middle East will be directed towards retarding the process of the region's consolidation and entrenchment under Western influence. At this stage the Soviet Union's interest lies in continued competition between the United States and Britain, in the persistence of conflicts between the Arab states, in the existence of conflicts between the national and religious minorities in the various Arab states and their governments, in fomenting class unrest, and in maintaining the conflict between Israel and the Arab states, or, at least, between Israel and some Arab states.

6. Israel desires peace and development in the Middle East, and has no state, general, local, or direct interest that might conflict with the organization of the Middle East under Western influence, since that process *per se* does not advance the danger of a world war or of the region's becoming an arena of combat. The only obligation of Israeli foreign policy is to ensure that Israel's interests are preserved in the course of consolidation of the region. Those interests are: territorial, ethnic, economic and military. In any Middle East settlement Israel must maintain a balance of power with its neighbours, and this is conditional not only on the level of military preparedness, but also on the pace and character of Israel's social, economic and ethnic development, on the one hand, and those of the various Arab states on the other.

7. Israel's national interest of maintaining friendly relations with the countries of the communist bloc derives from the following considerations:

(a) Such relations are a necessary, if not always sufficient, condition for the continued flow of Jewish emigration from various communist bloc countries. The validity of this consideration is contingent upon the continued flow of immigrants in practice. Its cessation for a lengthy period would greatly reduce the likelihood of its renewal, because such a turn of events sharply contradicts the accelerated process of equalizing the social structure in the People's Democracies with that in the Soviet Union.

(b) Israel enjoyed consistent support from the communist bloc countries at the UN in the past and continues to do so at present. It is very possible that Israel will need, and also receive, similar help again in the future.

(c) In certain circumstances Israel's relations with the communist bloc can serve as a means of pressuring the Western powers and will obligate them to show greater consideration for Israeli interests in the Middle East.

(d) In the event of a world war, the entire Middle East might be conquered by the Soviet army.

8. In the event – which is virtually certain – that the Cold War will continue, growing difficulties will arise which will hamper the continuation of Israel's friendly policies towards the communist bloc.

(a) Immigration is impossible without absorption of the immigrants. Absorption is impossible without the influx of capital. It is doubtful whether Jewish capital, in the form of donations and investments, will be able to meet Israel's absorption and development needs. It is doubtful that it will be obtained in the event that Israel becomes the one state in the Middle East that is hindering its emergence as a region of strategic influence for the non-communist bloc.

(b) The danger could arise that the Western powers will develop the Middle East in a way that will be injurious to Israel's state interests, even if this is confined only to accelerating the pace of development of the Arab states relative to Israel.

(c) In the event of a world war there is little likelihood that Israel will be able to maintain a neutral status indefinitely without its borders being infringed. We should remember that in World War II both Sweden and Switzerland were compelled to allow the Germans semi-military transit. Other non-belligerent states provided important aid to one or another of the combatant sides by contributing to their production efforts.

(d) In the UN arena and in international policy in general, Israeli freedom of manoeuvre and neutrality naturally entail not only advantages but risks as well. Here, too, a situation could emerge in which US policy would be guided by considerations similar to those that might turn US economic policy in a direction that would be negative from our point of view (assumptions (a) and (b) in this section).

The problems hinted at in this section could become far more severe should the Western powers attempt the concrete organization of a Mediterranean alliance as an extension of the Atlantic Pact or as a military–economic system subordinate to the Atlantic Pact. In that event, Israel's only prospect of evading a decision that would entail a crisis in our foreign policy would be if the West harboured the conception that for a variety of reasons it was not worth proposing participation in such an alliance to either Israel or the Arab states.

A crucial issue already confronting Israel today is this: As long as Israel continues to pursue its 'neutral' foreign policy, can we expect the Western powers to exert sufficient pressure on the Arab states to induce them to make peace

with Israel, along lines conducive to Israel's state interests? And can we expect that Arab states will be ready to make peace with us based on the above-mentioned conditions, without effective Western pressure?

9. In connection with the above, it should be borne in mind that Britain still views Israel's development and consolidation as a process that has certain adverse effects on British interests. It is probable that from time to time a proposal will be put forward to eliminate this conflict of interests by giving Israeli foreign policy a distinctly 'Western' orientation.

10. Foreign policy is not a series of arithmetical calculations that consist of sets of numbers inputted into the same basic algebraic equation. Only concrete, complex, and distinctive consideration can connect in each instance the sphere of basic assumptions and the specific decisions that changing international situations demand from leaders of states. However, it is both possible and desirable, on the basis of the above analysis, to formulate somewhat more concretely the basic assumptions of Israel's global foreign policy and to link them to some degree with possible decisions to be taken by various actors in the international political arena and with manifest acts of foreign policy, such as: forging military alliances, concluding non-aggression treaties, treaties of friendship, agreements regarding [military] bases, voting at the UN, commercial treaties and links, cultural ties, etc. This applies only to peacetime, since during a local or world war foreign policy necessarily assumes an unstable and completely opportunistic guise.

11. Schematically, we can only distinguish 'borderline situations', such as: *Scenario A*, in which the communist bloc and the non-communist powers pursue their current policy towards Israel; *Scenario B*, in which no change occurs in 'Western' policy towards Israel, but there is a sharp deterioration in the attitude of the communist bloc, whether over the *aliya* issue or in the UN arena and global policy, or in both spheres; *Scenario C*, in which no change occurs in the policy of the communist bloc towards Israel, but there is a sharp deterioration in the attitude of the Western powers politically, economically, or in both spheres.

Naturally, we could formulate other 'borderline situations' (e.g., a major *improvement* in the position of one side and no change in the position of the other, etc.), but the circumstances we have chosen are preferable from a practical point of view. Similarly, it is clear that 'borderline situations' are no more than abstractions, supportive logical fictions. In reality all that has ever existed and will ever exist are *intermediate* situations. Every intermediate situation is a distinctive concatenation of circumstances. Their diversity is infinite. A theoretical analysis can not describe them in advance in a way that will be of much concrete usefulness.

A remark should also be made about the term 'political action'. In the table that constitutes the final and summarizing section of this survey, that term is generally given an ostensibly narrow interpretation of a defined act: concluding an agreement, casting a vote and the like. However, we probably

overlook very little by taking this approach. Foreign policy makers are not naive. Their reaction to a series of actions which are commensurate, for example, with a treaty of friendship will probably be very much the same whether the treaty is actually signed or not.

[...][1]

[APPENDICES]

The sections of the memorandum were completed on the following dates:

(a)	Section on the issue of Jerusalem	2 January 1950
(b)	Section on the issue of Jewish emigration	4 January 1950
(c)	Sections on the issues of refugees and borders	6 January 1950
(d)	Concluding section	9 January 1950

This memorandum is for the eyes only of those to whom it is addressed. Please do not copy it in any form.

Note: This memorandum should be viewed as a continuation of the author's remarks on the subject 'International Politics and Israel'. Their intention was to outline the basic elements of global policy, especially as regards the policy of the Soviet Union and its allies, which have an impact on the Middle East region. The present memorandum is an attempt to describe and analyze the conjectured attitude of the Soviet Union towards some of Israel's basic problems. It should be emphasised that the validity of the memorandum is conditional upon and confined to current political circumstances which will, it appears, prevail in the near future as well.

Jerusalem

On the occasion of the visits that were paid in September to Mr. Gromyko and to Mr. Bakulin[2] (then director of the Middle East Department in the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs), we were unable to clarify the Soviet Union's position on the Jerusalem issue. This gave rise to conjectures and fears which in fact were subsequently confirmed. At the end of September 1949, I reported in a cable[3] a conversation with a Western diplomat regarding the Soviet position on the internationalization of Jerusalem. I noted that although I had neither the possibility nor the desire to say anything clear and unequivocal on

1. Detailed tables displaying these three situations have been omitted. See original document filed under ISA 130.11/2514/15.
2. See Docs. 264 and 265.
3. Not traced.

the subject, I nevertheless pointed out that 'the Soviet Union joined the Trusteeship Council in 1947' and that 'various possibilities exist regarding nationalization, which give rise to probabilities of influence by various political elements'.

(a) However, we should, all the same, not exaggerate the importance of the Soviet aspiration to augment its diplomatic influence in Israel by subordinating Jerusalem to the Trusteeship Council, of which the Soviet Union is a member. Soviet policy makers undoubtedly view this stand as primarily serving propaganda purposes. If Jerusalem were to be internationalized, a stable majority would be organized in the Trusteeship Council to prevent the Soviet Union from exercising any administrative influence. The Soviet representative would certainly stand up for the rights of those residents who were in opposition to the ostensible international government, which would necessarily and in any event come to represent the anti-Soviet forces on the international scene. The Soviet representatives would identify the foreign government in Jerusalem with the imperialist, anti-Soviet front. The Soviet representative would in fact support tendencies towards democracy and self-rule; he would direct the population's anger against all the concrete, tangible manifestations of international rule, which had been distorted and transformed into thinly veiled imperialist rule. This, on the assumption that the majority of the inhabitants (for whom the Soviet Union has become the spokesman and concerned ally in supreme international institutions) will quickly ignore the fact that at first the Soviet Union itself lent a hand (albeit with vigorous reservations) to the establishment of an international regime in Jerusalem and its environs. We can safely conjecture that should deliberations begin on the constitution of an internationalized Jerusalem the Soviet Union will be part of the opposition. It will demand more rights for the city's residents, propose a constitutional arrangement which will appear to both contradict and affirm the principles of international government and of self-government, [and] constantly warn against the intention of an imperialist takeover. We can point to a characteristic example from the past, one which entails flawed legal–constitutional logic, has no concrete prospects of realization, but also has some usefulness as a passing opposition manoeuvre. I refer to the vigorous campaign of the Yugoslav representative on the UN investigative commission in Palestine (UNSCOP) for a bi-national state in Palestine.[4]

(b) The overt reason adduced by the Soviet representatives should be construed as being genuine but of secondary importance: their desire to completely put an end to British influence in western Palestine and hence to thwart the king of Transjordan, who wishes to gain control over part of Jerusalem. There is perhaps no need to elaborate here, as the point is clear and has often been analyzed.

---

4. For the Yugoslav position in UNSCOP, see Doc. 89.

(c) We should also not belittle the value of the Soviet vote from the viewpoint of the propaganda needs of the Arab communist organizations and from that of Soviet political tactics *vis-à-vis* other Arab elements which may sometimes be willing to cooperate (albeit partially, temporarily, and briefly) with Soviet policy in the Middle East. By its lengthy and consistent support for Israel the Soviet Union undoubtedly did great harm to its ability to exercise influence and to advancing communist propaganda in the Arab states. These opportunities and prospects were inherently limited to begin with. Soviet policy makers are certainly aware of this. Still, there are numerous signs attesting to the fact that the Soviet Union is definitely not willing to abandon this front just because, seemingly, 'the effort is fruitless'. Among these signs we can enumerate the following:

(1) The anti-Zionist propaganda policy of Soviet broadcasts in Arabic (to which we can perhaps add the visit which, according to rumour, Lutskii paid to the Lebanese minister in Moscow).[5]

(2) Soviet propaganda policy in articles about the Middle East, in which a clear distinction is drawn between the interests of the policy makers and those of the masses (in some instances we find even implicit agreement with the line of non-communist Arab opposition political groups, such as – during Hinnawi's period of rule[6] – justification of the objections raised by the Syrian opposition to unification with Iraq).

Now the Soviet Union has adopted a stand which can be invoked in order to refute the argument that communism and Zionism are allies which are working together to undermine Arab interests.

We should examine whether the Soviet Union's vote on the Jerusalem question will not serve as a communist propaganda claim directed at the Arab refugees from new Jerusalem, and in particular at the Christians or Orthodox Christians among them.

(d) Soviet policy–makers will undoubtedly realize the setbacks that will necessarily result from their support of the internationalization of Jerusalem:

(1) The prospects of internationalization were poor to begin with, and this greatly reduces the importance of reason (a) above (forging a new diplomatic and propaganda position of influence in Palestine) and completely voids argument (b) of content (Abdallah's ouster).

(2) This Soviet policy necessarily propels Israeli foreign policy towards certain basic Anglo-American tendencies, which are beginning to emerge in the Middle East. (It is possible, though, that in the Soviet view this rapprochement is developing in any event, so that they have less to lose.)

(3) Maki's propaganda ability is undoubtedly declining sharply as a result of its 'repentance' in the matter of Jerusalem. What is probably more important for the formulators of Soviet policy is that these developments

5. V. Lutskii, Soviet orientalist who lived in Palestine in the 1920s.
6. Sami Hinnawi, Syrian officer, led the coup against Husni Za'im in August 1949 and headed the military regime in Syria until 19 December 1949.

reduce the prospects of cooperation between Maki and Mapam, which had increased to some degree when negotiations failed between Mapai and Mapam. Let us not forget that the communist movement is now making great efforts to establish a common front with opposition forces in many countries.

(4) It should not be ruled out that the connection, which we have emphasized, between the Soviet Union's stand on the Jerusalem question and the future of Russian property in Jerusalem is hardly a trivial matter from the point of view of Soviet considerations. True, it is possible that the Soviet Union does not especially fear a 'victory of the Vatican'. The Soviet Union's contemptuous assessment of the real power of the Catholic Church may lead them to view Vatican diplomatic successes as illusory and lacking real political and social durability.

These arguments, to which others could be added, are probably no less weighty than the three we adduced above when we put forth conjectures as to what had induced the Soviet Union to adopt a positive attitude towards the internationalization of Jerusalem. Such a decision is conceivable only if we can infer that it derives from a general and fundamental assumption concerning Soviet policy in regard to its vital interests in the Middle East.

Some argue that the fundamental assumption which explains Soviet policy on the subject under discussion, is the Soviet Union's belief that it must prevent Israel from becoming too strong, since a stronger Israel, more populous and more secure within its borders, might become more dependent on the United States due to its numerous and extensive economic needs. This writer believes that this is a mistaken interpretation.

What, on the basis of the above explanation, is Israel's 'optimal strength' from a Soviet perspective? Why should the Soviet Union believe that a weak Israel, doubting its physical capacity to defend itself, would be more successful in maintaining greater independence in its foreign policy and in resisting the temptation to 'purchase' its security by means of a full compromise with the Western powers? How is this analysis of Soviet policy towards Israel to be reconciled with the Soviet aid we enjoyed in the past and with the Jewish emigration policy which Russia's allies are pursuing in the present? Moreover, the Soviet Union's policy towards Israel is at one and the same time that of a global power and a global movement. It is one link, part of a continuous whole. This policy can not be analyzed without reference to *regional* geopolitics, in our case that of the Middle East.

The principal reason for the Soviet vote in favour of Jerusalem's internationalization is simply the very opposite of that underlying the cool attitude of the Anglo-Saxon powers towards that proposal. It was not fear of Israel's aggrandizement that was decisive for the Soviet Union but fear of political stabilization in the Middle East. Because from the Soviet point of view, stability in the region prepares it above all to play the role of a political–military area of deployment against the Soviet Union, the role of a socio-political 'parade-ground' against the communist movement.

Let us hope that the new entanglement over the Jerusalem question will not lead to a new military flare-up. What is certain is that this development may

hamper the establishment of peaceful, neighbourly relations between Israel and at least some of the Arab states. A UN decision on Jerusalem could heighten tensions in the Middle East and make the final settlement more remote.

The Soviet Union does not engage in quarrelmongering for its own sake. However, in accordance with their overall conception, the makers of its foreign policy must sow division and impede compromise in areas lying *outside* their influence. Such areas, after all, are under the influence of those whom the Soviet Union considers its mortal foes, who are plotting to attack the Soviet Union and who represent imperialist, monopolist–capitalist regimes whose decline is already looming on the horizon of history. And their wish is that these decadent regimes come to a speedy end through the aggravation of their inherent internal economic, social, and political contradictions.

Thus, the pronouncement by the Soviet representatives that their vote on the Jerusalem question should not be construed as a change of attitude towards Israel is true.

The Soviet Union's attitude towards Israel is determined by the same unchanging principles that underlay the Soviet vote in favour of internationalization. Support for Israel is justified in the eyes of Soviet policy makers to the degree that Israel's very existence is a fact that impedes the stability, cohesiveness and consolidation of the Middle East by the Western powers and in the spirit of their global policy. We will return to this idea later in our memorandum.

Emigration Policy

We have reached a stage at which the Soviet bloc's current policy on the immigration of Jews to Israel has become quite clear. To assess all the positive aspects of this policy we must bear in mind that the very granting of exit permits to the citizens of that bloc contradicts basic tendencies of the regimes that prevail in [those countries]. In effect, borders are sealed. The trains and planes that cross them carry only officials and diplomats. Ordinary citizens do not enter and do not leave – except for Jews, who continue to depart by the thousands. Moreover, by various means, in one degree or another, and for a variety of reasons the authorities are directing this emigration to Israel and not to any chance location. Numerous signs attest to the decision that for the time being there will be Jewish emigration from the [People's] Democracies and *not* from the Soviet Union. At the same time, the decision taken appears to be flexible. It apparently grants the various governments considerable freedom to determine, and also to change, the pace of departure and its forms. Furthermore, the decision is conditional on a time frame whose limit has not yet been determined.

In fact, in relation to the issue under discussion the People's Democracies are divided into two groups: on the one hand – Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Poland, regarding which Jewish emigration is not at present a prime issue of

Israeli *foreign* policy; on the other hand – Romania and Hungary. The core of the problem is the scale of Jewish emigration from these two countries which their governments will accept. The will of the Jews to immigrate [to Israel] is a function of the concrete possibility of crossing the borders, of the situation in the Diaspora, and of conditions in Israel. We will not be displaying excessive optimism regarding Israel or excessive pessimism regarding the Diaspora if we assume that a large and growing wave of immigration would reach us from Hungary as well if its gates were to be opened.

Three types of factors may affect the emigration policy of the Hungarian and Romanian governments and incline it, within the framework of the Soviet bloc as a whole, towards greater severity or greater leniency. Two of these groups of factors are not within our sphere of influence, namely:

(1) internal circumstances in Romania and Hungary, such as: the development of antisemitism, the pace at which the Jewish masses are adapting to the new and shifting social and economic conditions, [and] general domestic problems of the regimes in these countries;

(2) effects of international tension, security considerations, etc.

However, Israeli policy could also influence the attitude of Romania and Hungary towards Jewish emigration. This applies to both our policy on the specific question of Jewish emigration from those countries, and our overall foreign policy, to the degree that it is a function of the emigration issue. I refer to our foreign policy and its diplomatic manifestations towards Hungary and Romania, and also to our foreign policy towards the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies with which we have already reached an understanding on the question of Jewish emigration.

What can we do in this regard?

(1) We must never reduce our pressure, even for a minute. Of course, a decision has to be taken from time to time on its forms – light or heavy, direct or indirect – but under no circumstances should we miss any opportunity to raise the issue in diplomatic contacts or via other channels and also in public forums. Naturally, the manner is important, and the requisites of these regimes' prestige must not be ignored.

(2) The gist of our demand must be clear, precise and unchanging: exit permits for all Jews who wish to immigrate to Israel. Duration of the permit: one year.

(3) From time to time we must make concrete proposals, which we can and intend to implement, in order to demonstrate our readiness to do a good turn in return for the exit permits.

(4) Every limited exit permit should be welcomed, but with a critical look at the restrictions and a reiteration of our general claim regarding emigration.

(5) We must do all we can to avoid the impression of a rapid cooling in our friendly relations with any of the People's Democracies after we succeed in actually solving the problem of Jewish emigration from that country. An important example: we are entitled, and even obliged, to reduce the staff of

our legations in countries where the consular treatment of *aliya* (or of contact with the Jewish population) has been reduced to a minimum because the majority of the Jews have emigrated to Israel. We *are not entitled* to demonstrate the reduction of our diplomatic ties with those countries by closing down legations or posting a non-resident minister in countries where previously we had a resident minister plenipotentiary.

(6) The latest development in Romania does not under any circumstances justify a lengthy delay in appointing a minister there.[7] We should view with great regret every twist in our foreign policy line under the influence of chance or even personal factors.

(7) We should not delude ourselves into thinking that we will succeed in isolating the issue of the scope of Jewish emigration from Romania and Hungary from our overall political and economic relations with the Soviet bloc. Furthermore, we will not be able to isolate this problem even from matters that are ostensibly far removed from it, such as our relations with Transjordan or our voting and stands at the UN. Indeed, Israel can not subordinate itself and its Middle East and global policy to this one issue of the scope of Jewish emigration from Romania and Hungary. On the other hand, certainly no one denies that this is an issue of major importance for Israel. Every time we have the opportunity to adopt a policy that is amenable to the Soviet bloc this should be emphasized to the Soviet representatives and an attempt should be made to link it to the question of Jewish emigration. We should not neglect any opportunity in which we can present our activity as remuneration (in the spirit of paragraph 3 above).

(8) We must reject every Soviet attempt to claim that Jewish emigration from Romania and Hungary is a question in which the Soviet Union has no say. True, this problem should perhaps serve as a subject for discussion with the Soviet Union at a higher level and not only through the channels of routine diplomatic contacts. It is not impossible that in this manner we might succeed in circumventing various obstacles. Logically, local Romanian and Hungarian elements, including various low-level officials, would have greater power to forbid and delay than to permit and facilitate.

(9) We must understand that preventing publicity about emigration from Hungary and Romania may be very important for the governments of those countries – first and foremost, for reasons related to the ideological education of their populations, and perhaps also for reasons of communist propaganda in Arab states or Soviet political tactics *vis-à-vis* those states.

It is imperative that we adhere strictly to all our commitments to prevent publicity in this matter. In this case it is no less crucial, and perhaps even more

---

7. Following Israel's protest over the de facto termination of emigration from Romania, the Romanians informed Israel that they considered emigration from their country an internal affair in which they would not tolerate outside intervention. The Israeli minister in Romania, Reuven Rubin, was recalled 12.12.49 (see also Doc. 292, n. 3). Ehud Avriel was nominated to the post in June 1950.

so, than was the case at the time with regard to *aliya* from Yemen.[8] Moreover, if, for our part, we can come up with an arrangement that ensures less publicity, it is desirable that we should try to propose it to the Hungarian or Romanian authorities within the framework of the exchanges of views between us.

(10) We must pay heed to manifestations of public activity in Israel by the masses of new immigrants from the various People's Democracies. Immigrants from the countries where the exit problem has been resolved positively should perhaps be encouraged to take an active part in non-partisan friendship associations, e.g., Israel–Poland, Israel–Czechoslovakia, Israel–Bulgaria. Such associations should not exist on paper only, and one of their most desirable forms of activity should be, perhaps, to send gifts to the authorities in their members' countries of origin (e.g., citrus fruit to children in Poland).

As for former Romanians and Hungarians, it is doubtful whether the time is ripe to encourage friendly public activity. At the same time, however, it should be borne in mind that hostile demonstrations by them against the governments of their countries of origin are an extreme and very grave means of pressure, and may do more harm than good. They could be interpreted as the consolidation of a bloc of hostile emigrants and generate great anxiety among the political leaders of the Soviet bloc.

* * *

Tremendous efforts are now under way to accelerate to the utmost the political, economic, spiritual, military, and social merger of the People's Democracies in a sort of centralist 'Soviet commonwealth' arrayed around the Soviet Union. It must be clear that this is the goal towards which Soviet policy makers are now striving energetically and unflinchingly in the face of all difficulties or dangers.

National differences are the weakest impeding factor. Economic, political, and military centralization has effectively been achieved. Spiritual cohesion is rapidly developing. Equalization of the social structure in the cities is making good progress, and we will undoubtedly soon be witness to heightened efforts in that same direction in the rural areas as well, where until now the communists have shown moderation and forbearance, the result of their experience with collectivization in the Soviet Union. Be that as it may, there is a greater resemblance between the social reality in the Soviet Union today and that in the People's Democracies than there was when the Baltic republics were annexed. There is little doubt that it has recently been decided to completely alter the pace of this development – in reaction to Titoism and

8. Mass emigration from Yemen took place from November 1949 to September 1950. In this short period, some 50,000 immigrants came to Israel. Owing to the Egyptians' refusal to permit passage through the Suez Canal, the immigrants were air-lifted to Israel in what was later known as Operation Magic Carpet.

because of the constant escalation of the Cold War, and perhaps also in connection with the victory in China.[9]

This writer is unable to determine whether, according to the conception of Soviet political leaders, distinctions should be made among the People's Democracies, between those nearer and those further from the final goal. Again, it is difficult to form an opinion as to whether Romania and Hungary are considered to be among those who lag behind. In any event, the direction of development and the potency of the accelerating forces are absolutely clear.

The issue of Jewish emigration from Romania and Hungary is intricately intertwined with this process. Hence the extreme urgency. It should be perfectly clear that despite possible 'zigzags' the prospects that the exit gates will be opened wide are constantly diminishing, certainly in the present historical context. We should not view this consideration as being theoretical and abstract. We are liable to pay a heavy price for being too hesitant, too routine, too given to petty 'practicality' in dealing with the question of the scale of Jewish emigration from Romania and Hungary. The time has come for us to throw Israel's full political weight into the balance. In this writer's view, time is so pressing that we must not flinch even in the face of possible risks, and we must not consider preservation of the minuscule trickle of emigration as a prime factor in our political reasoning concerning the problem under discussion.

Let us try to argue for opening wide the exit gates for one year while notifying them that at the end of that year we will declare that Israel's role regarding Romanian and Hungarian Jewry will come to an end. As for Germany, we are pursuing a similar line of our own free will, without objective or subjective external political pressure. In this way, we will link the demand for Jewish emigration concretely, manifestly and most vigorously with the trend toward Sovietization of Romania and Hungary.

The Arab Refugee Problem

To date, the Soviet bloc has evinced little interest in this problem. Population transfers and population migrations are phenomena which Soviet politicians view with a certain detachment as being unavoidable in certain historical circumstances. On the other hand, the Soviet bloc has objected sharply to all the methods of dealing with the refugees which were adopted in the past and which have been decided on for the near future. The Soviet representatives did not vote for the proposal of the Technical Committee,[10] and the Soviet press has stated emphatically that the entire public works project in which the

9. The civil war in China came to an end in October 1949 with the proclamation of the Chinese People's Republic in Peking and the withdrawal of the Nationalist forces to Taiwan.

10. The Technical Committee of the Palestine Conciliation Commission was established in May 1949. It was headed by an American representative, with the participation of French, British and Turkish members, and was charged with collecting and assessing material for development schemes in the Middle East.

Arab refugees are to be employed and every operation that Clapp headed in the past[11] and is recommending for the future are only ploys to consolidate and strengthen imperialist positions in the Middle East.

However, the Soviet stand on the refugee question – even their criticism – has not yet been clarified. Still less have Soviet political leaders had their say from a positive aspect – not having put forward any proposal as yet which could constitute a positive solution for the Arab refugee problem.

On this question, then, the Soviet Union has maintained its freedom of political manoeuvre, and the possibilities are many. We will try to outline the most important of these:

(1) The Soviet Union will refrain completely from stating its position on the question of the Arab refugees and will make do with general criticism as it has until now. The communist movements will try to foment activity among the refugees. The latter may become a bitter and rebellious element and in part may become even more active than the rest of the Arab masses around them, who did not experience the higher living standard of mandatory Palestine and whose lives were not marked by a sudden revolutionary crisis, geographic uprooting, [and] life in camps with the elements of mass organization this entails.

The prospect that the Soviet Union will adopt this kind of passive policy on the question at hand will be greater if the problem is not raised again for extensive treatment at the UN. However, even in these circumstances an undesirable Soviet initiative is possible if tension heightens over the refugee problem between certain Arab states and the Western powers.

(2) The Soviet Union will give its explicit blessing to the settlement of the majority of the Arab refugees outside Israel's boundaries in conjunction with rehabilitation and development projects within the framework of 'Point Four', the Clapp or McGhee programs,[12] etc. This writer believes that this possibility is non-existent.

(3) A Soviet political propaganda offensive on the refugee issue without an explicit demand for their repatriation to Israel. In this case an attempt may be made to link the refugee problem with the demand for an independent Arab state in part of western Palestine. In the event of such a development, we should be wary of an undesirable fusion of the refugee and border problems, and to a lesser degree of the refugee problem and the demand for an international zone in Jerusalem, which will be capable, ostensibly, of absorbing its former Arab residents.

(4) The gravest possibility is a qualified, or even unqualified, Soviet demand for the return of the Arab refugees to Israel. This is not an impossible development in certain circumstances. In our situation in which we lack the

---

11. Gordon Clapp, formerly chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority, was the designated head of the United Nations Survey Group, a subsidiary body of the Conciliation Commission charged with examining the question of resettlement and repatriation schemes for the Arab refugees.
12. See Doc. 376, n. 2 and Doc. 243 and n. 4 there.

ability to monitor the way in which Soviet policy on Israel is being formulated, through a free exchange of ideas, informal feelers and the like. Thus, we had to pay heed even to a slip of the tongue by Bakulin (director of the Middle East Department at the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs) while he was intoxicated: 'I know that you do not want any Arabs to come to you – and you are not right in this at all: In very negative circumstances there might even be a communist argument that will counterpose our demand 'to receive' Jewish immigrants from the People's Democracies with our unwillingness to permit the return of working-class Arab refugees who were uprooted from their villages as a result of a war that was fomented by an imperialist conspiracy.

Our general conclusion is that on the question of the Arab refugees Israel can not expect vigorous political support from the Soviet Union. In the different circumstances which can be foreseen we can expect – at best – a neutral Soviet position. In less opportune circumstances there might even be a negative Soviet stand.

From the point of view of our relations with the Soviet Union and in view of the above analysis, it appears highly desirable to prevent the refugee problem from being raised at the UN and to strive for its solution in a form that leaves little room for Soviet intervention. Obviously, this is not the only consideration or even the chief consideration in determining Israel's policy and its tactics on this issue. On the other hand, it would be wrong to ignore this aspect of the problem.

The Border Issue

On this problem, too, Soviet political leaders have so far refrained from publicly disclosing their position, and very possibly from determining it at all. On the other hand, several Soviet political assumptions related to this issue are already clear:

(1) The Soviet Union still insists on the establishment of an independent Arab state in part of western Palestine and opposes the annexation of any part of western Palestine to Transjordan.

(2) On the other hand, the Soviet Union would be ready to agree, in certain circumstances, to the admission of Transjordan to the UN – in contrast to South Korea, where, the Soviet Union believes, more vital and direct Soviet interests are at stake.

(3) Soviet *de jure* recognition of Israel should not be construed as de facto recognition of the current boundaries of Israeli rule – as the Jerusalem issue shows.

(4) There is virtually no doubt that the Soviet Union will be ready to support Israeli access to the Red Sea – if only for the sole reason that this will block the political-territorial continuity between the [Suez] Canal region and the region comprising Transjordan, Iraq and Iran.

In the event that the Soviet Union undertakes to define more precisely its position on the border question, we can probably expect positive and negative developments alike.

(1) We may assume that the Soviet Union will oppose any 'rectification' of the borders to our detriment which may be proposed by the Conciliation Commission and which may enjoy any sort of Western support. The Soviet argument in this case will not necessarily be pro-Israeli and will be formulated with maximum effort not to affect the Arabs adversely. But it is hardly conceivable that the Soviet Union will support in any circumstances a program that is the product of an American–French–Turkish compromise, with British consent.

(2) It is self-evident that the Soviet Union will firmly oppose any transfer of territories to Transjordan.

(3) On the other hand, there is a danger of more or less qualified Soviet support for Arab states that call for an independent Arab state in that part of western Palestine designated for such a state in the [UN] resolution of 29 November 1947. Here a Soviet argument may be adduced emphasizing that this independent Arab state must be both territorially and economically viable, especially in view of the masses of refugees who are concentrated in the Arab sector of western Palestine. Assumptions of this kind dictate if not a return to November 1947, at least a sympathetic consideration of proposals to effect border modifications in favour of an independent Arab state. In this connection there might also be lukewarm Soviet support for implementing the economic unification plan between Israel and an independent Arab state.

The prospects of the Soviet Union adopting such a policy will be greater in the event of heightened tension between the Arab states and the Western powers over the question of Israel's borders. Should an acute conflict develop between Britain and Egypt over the issue of British bases in the canal zone, it can not be ruled out that this will also have some effect on the Soviet position *vis-à-vis* the Gaza area.

To sum up, it would appear that we have no reason to expect much Soviet support in connection with the border question, and that the current position of the Soviet Union, which is effectively neutral because it is undefined, is the most convenient Soviet stand possible in the existing circumstances and in those that are nearest to being realized. This is especially true should we progress towards a permanent settlement of our political borders through a rapprochement with Abdallah's kingdom or by some sort of an agreement with it. It is doubtful whether we will succeed in adopting that political line without causing some cooling of the Soviet Union's attitude towards Israel.

Our conclusion is that from the point of view of the essence of the Soviet position regarding Israel, it is desirable that the issue of our borders should be resolved primarily outside the UN framework. The policy which Israel has recently adopted towards the Conciliation Commission is also convenient from the perspective of this memorandum – provided we are able to prevent the referral of the border problem from the Conciliation Commission to the UN General Assembly, or the incursion of the issue in one form or another into the sphere of international politics.

Israeli Neutrality from the Soviet Point of View

To what degree is Israeli neutrality a positive factor *from the point of view of Soviet political leaders*, and more particularly, what in their opinion is the *essence* of that positive factor? By process of elimination, it will not be very difficult to arrive at a fairly safe hypothesis on this question.

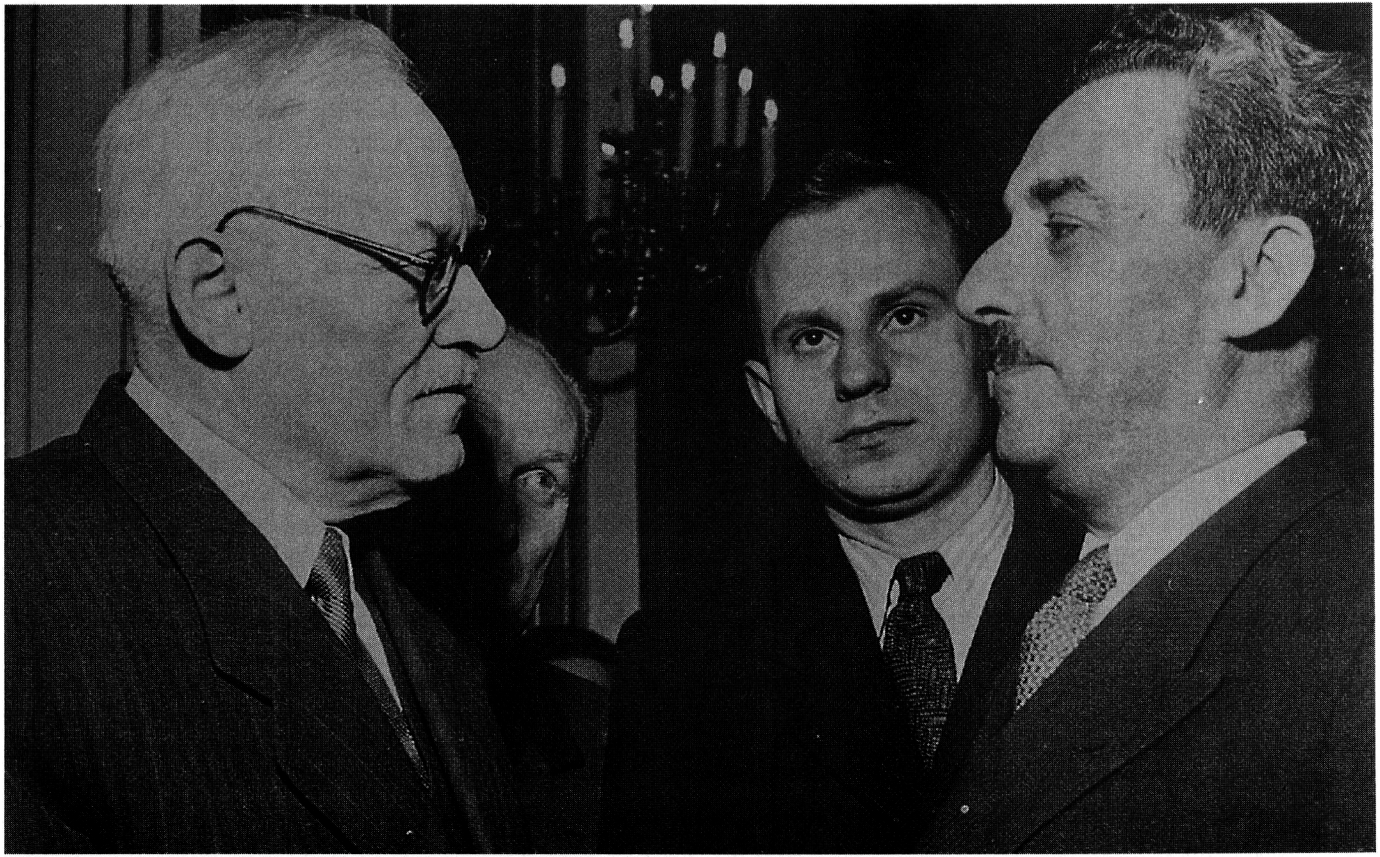
1. Israel's domestic social situation is in itself not important in this regard despite the many differences when compared with social conditions in other Middle Eastern countries.

According to Leninist–Stalinist doctrine, a direct transition is possible in the present historical period from a feudal to a socialist regime. The existence of the Soviet superpower enables and facilitates a bold leap of this kind. As an extreme example we can point to the Mongolian People's Republic in which, according to the Soviet viewpoint, a nomadic society that is feudal or pre-feudal is undergoing a direct transition to a socialist society. The Soviet Union's attitude during a certain period towards India, on the one hand, and Pakistan, on the other, is also instructive, and proves that Soviet political leaders attach no importance to the fact that the labour movements are more strongly entrenched, both organizationally and ideologically, in India. The Soviet Union continues to view 'rightist' social democracy (i.e., that which opposes merging with the communists within the framework of united parties) as their major foe wherever social-democratic movements enjoy great political influence. The strength of cooperative movements in different countries certainly has no effect on the Soviet Union's political attitude to those countries.

Now, though, there is no longer any need to engage in a lengthy series of theoretical analyses of principle. The struggle that has erupted between the Soviet bloc and Yugoslavia demonstrates that from the Soviet point of view there is only one determining factor in the present period, in which a global resolution is rapidly unfolding. That factor is the political and military cohesiveness of communist forces throughout the world, in the face of the danger of a united imperialist offensive, that will preserve the Soviet, socialist, communist substance and also weaken the imperialist counter-action, which seeks to prevent the spread of the revolutionary processes to new regions of the world.

The basis of Stalinist strategy is complete and absolute focus on the main issue. Therefore, every breach, deviation or passing political disagreement (and certainly any one of principle) is an inexpiable heresy, and in contrast to which no counter-balancing weight at all is attributed to any degree of social democracy, nationalization, rural cooperatives, etc.

The penetration of Western capital into the sovereign countries of Asia is accelerating the development of an industrial proletariat in those countries and transforming their social structure. However, all the signs indicate that for the Soviet Union this positive factor is completely unimportant in the present period, when pitted against the danger that the penetration of such capital will tighten imperialist unity by increasing dependence on the Western powers of



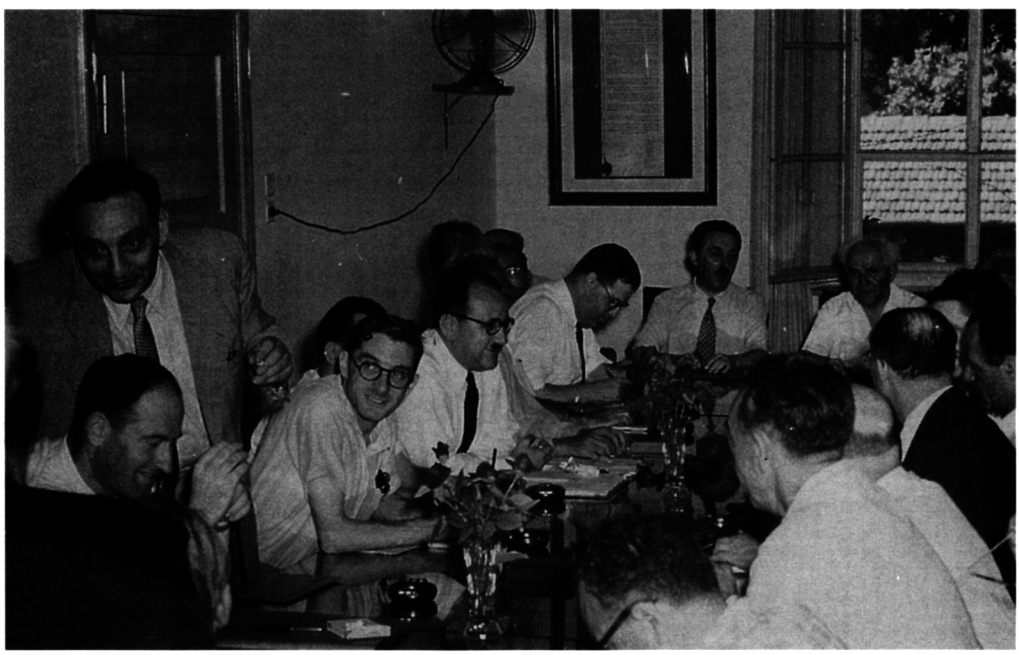
11. Andrei Vyshinskii (left) and Moshe Sharett at the Fourth Session of the UN General Assembly in Paris, 1949
(Maariv Book Guild, Tel Aviv)

12. From left to right: Semen Tsarapkin, Abba Eban and Arthur Lourie at a meeting of the UN Security Council, New York, early 1950s *(Abba Eban Centre for Israeli Diplomacy, Hebrew University of Jerusalem)*

13. Meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, 11 December 1951. Far left: Yaacov Riftin. Seated at the table, centre: committee chairman Meir Argov and David Ben-Gurion; first from right, MK Yitzhak Ben-Aharon; second from right, Chief of Staff Lieutenant-General Yigael Yadin *(Israel State Archives)*

14. Russian Church of the Holy Trinity, Russian Compound, Jerusalem, early 1950s *(AVP RF)*

15. Visit of Soviet diplomats to Gornenskii Monastery, Jerusalem, *circa* 1948–49 *(AVP RF)*



16. Conference of Israel diplomatic representatives abroad, Tel Aviv, 17 July 1951. At the head of the table, Moshe Sharett and David Ben-Gurion. Standing: Shmuel Eliashiv, 1951 *(Government Press Office, Jerusalem)*

17. Ershov delivering a speech at a tree-planting ceremony, Soviet Army forest, near Kibbutz Maale Hahamisha, 22 June 1950 *(AVP RF)*

18. Ershov (centre) at the unveiling of a monument in the Soviet Army forest. The plaque of the monument reads: 'This forest was planted by citizens of Israel in honour of the Soviet Army, 1950' *(AVP RF)*

19. Ershov with President Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, at a reception for the diplomatic corps, 8 January 1953 *(AVP RF)*

20. Soviet and Israeli diplomats at a reception in New York, early 1950s. Left to right: Mrs. Malik, Iakov Malik, Abba Eban, Michael Comay, Reginald (Mordechai) Kidron, Mrs. Kidron, Arkadii Sobolev *(Abba Eban Centre for Israeli Diplomacy, Hebrew University of Jerusalem)*

the Asian states, of the governmental mechanisms in those countries, and of the social elements which currently rule them.

2. There are some who believe that what the Soviet Union finds positive in the Israeli social system is a greater possibility of a communist victory than in any other country in the Middle East. Objectively speaking that assumption is not in fact self-evident and requires a thorough examination, going well beyond the framework of this memorandum on issues in Israeli foreign policy. However, it is even more doubtful that Soviet political leaders are today comparing the prospects of communism in Israel, on the one hand, and in the Arab states, on the other, when determining their Middle East policy. It is very probable that the Soviet Union has no expectations at all that the near future will see decisive communist victories, deriving from local developments, anywhere in the Middle East.

Soviet policy towards Italy, with its strong communist party, is no more friendly than Soviet policy towards many other countries in which communist influence is negligible.

Soviet policy on the internationalization of Jerusalem does not attest to the fact that the Soviet Union attributes critical importance to the fate of Maki.

3. There is quite a fundamental difference between the status of the Western powers in Israel and their status in other countries of the Middle East. Turkey is linked to the Western powers by a concrete military alliance. British armed forces are stationed under treaty in Egypt, Transjordan and Iraq. The ties between the United States and Iran were demonstrated and reinforced during the Shah's visit to America. The American posture on Saudi Arabia is constantly evolving. No such phenomena can be found in Israel, and we may hope that this fact has not escaped the notice of Soviet political leaders and that they are not indifferent to it. On the other hand, they know that Israel can not remain in a state of total, and not very splendid, isolation, and that all the talk about Israeli economic autarky is baseless and irrelevant. Moreover, the global powers apparently share the view that in case of a war between them each will ignore unflinchingly, at least temporarily, the sovereign independence and territorial neutrality of small states that are located along their strategic lines.

4. It is probably unnecessary to elaborate in order to show that commercial relations between the Soviet bloc and Israel are unimportant to Soviet political leaders. Recently, the Soviet Union has displayed very little interest in trade with countries outside their bloc, and the commercial negotiations conducted in the past two years between the Soviet Union and various West European countries generally produced no significant results. The statement by Mao Tse-tung, through the TASS News Agency, that the Chinese People's Republic is trying to obtain credit from the Soviet Union, hints at new and immense development problems which are currently on the agenda of the Soviet part of the world. On the other hand, in the course of a year there has been no progress on Israel's request for commercial credit from the Soviet Union. There

are no indications that commercial relations between the two countries will increase substantially in the near future, and in large measure this must be imputed to the lack of interest and initiative shown by the Soviet side.

Nevertheless, it is in our political interest not to allow our commercial relations with the Soviet Union to disintegrate completely, even if the economic possibilities are probably quite limited. For the present, these possibilities are greater with respect to our commercial relations with some of the People's Democracies. Here, too, we can not expect that the other side will be prepared to make economic concessions out of political considerations. It is more likely that such concessions will be demanded of us. There is no doubt that the Soviet bloc is still interested in accumulating dollars.

In any event, it is far from certain that the scope of our commercial relations with the Soviet bloc can meaningfully exceed commercial contacts between the bloc and the Arab countries, especially Egypt. On the other hand, Soviet political leaders are not likely to delude themselves into thinking that the near future will see any sort of balance between Israel's economic ties with their bloc and its ties with the West. Our economic relations with the Soviet bloc are not devoid of political value. In the given circumstances, certain economic activity could determine much in our relations with one of the People's Democracies. However, we should ascribe only secondary, temporary and symptomatic importance to the economic–commercial dimension from the viewpoint of Soviet consideration of their policy towards Israel.

5. An exceptional situation is emerging in the United Nations in which the Soviet Union is necessarily less impressed by Israel's distinctive and independent stance, particularly by its neutrality. Numerically, the Soviet bloc is very meagrely represented at the UN, in a manner hardly commensurate with the global balance of power. It is natural that in these circumstances Soviet political leaders should view the deliberations in the UN General Assembly mainly in terms of their propaganda value. Statements by non-Soviet representatives attacking the Western powers and levelling severe accusations at them are almost always published in the Soviet press, whereas the lists of states that vote in favour of Soviet motions are generally not published in full. The Soviet Union's extraordinary motions are usually rejected, and they apparently attach little importance to whether or not their motion receives another vote or two from the sidelines.

However, Israel's policy does not permit its representatives to sharply attack any power in the UN – especially on issues of global policy. It is precisely representatives of various Arab countries who sometimes allow themselves to declaim against imperialism etc., and such performances, even if they are not to be taken seriously, give satisfaction to the Soviet representatives.

Similarly, the voting statistics will not underscore Israeli neutrality of a positive character from the Soviet point of view. In fact, it was impossible for our representatives at the UN to take a stand that, in this regard, differed greatly from that adopted by countries such as India or even Yemen.

A far-reaching change in policy expressed in Israeli statements and votes is apparently not possible without abandoning the essence of our independent position.

* * *

What, then, is the answer to the question posed at the beginning of this section? What is the *main* positive element, from the Soviet point of view, that justified their support for Israel in the past and justifies their continued support for us, albeit partial and reserved, today as well – for example, on the important issue of Jewish emigration from the People's Democracies?

It would appear that the only logical answer is that Israel's very existence in the Middle East is an objective fact that does much to impede the region's consolidation and integration under Western supervision – economically and socially as well as politically and militarily. It is highly possible that but for the existence of Israel the Western powers would already have succeeded in organizing the region completely – even in the face of the competition among themselves and the contradictions among the various Arab states.

Today, however, we are witnessing a new development. The Western powers have resigned themselves to Israel's existence. Very possibly, too, Western (and Arab) pressure on Israel is weakening on both the refugee question and border issues. On the other hand, the Western powers are striving, more or less together, to neutralize the tension that was generated in the Middle East by the establishment of the Jewish state. Israel, for its part, wants peace with its neighbours. Israel is not willing to achieve peace at any price, but it is also not willing, for example, to make peace conditional on the non-annexation of the Arab sector of Palestine to Transjordan.

Israel will not agree to the establishment of [foreign] military bases on its territory and will not join any alliance that is directed against the Soviet Union. However, we have seen that our policy in this respect has little strategic importance.

In other words: objective processes may develop which will reduce Israel's positive importance in the eyes of Soviet political leaders.

And this, by the way, is yet another reason in support of our assumption that the issue of Jewish emigration from Romania and Hungary is extremely urgent, and that we must be prepared to make a supreme political effort, a very energetic effort, to resolve the problem to the degree that is given to resolution at the present historical stage – before it is too late.

247
Sh. Friedman to M. Namir (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2513/17
[Tel Aviv] 12 June 1949

Rumours of the arrest of Yiddish writers in Russia are emanating with increasing frequency from a variety of sources and gaining an aura of authenticity. *Davar* would like to publish, in very cautious fashion, a piece on this subject, accompanied by a demand for a denial or an explanation. In our opinion this should not be opposed. What is your view?[1]

248
Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – M. Namir (Moscow, 21 June 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.5, L.29
Secret

Namir paid a call on me at his request. He told me that a few days ago the US had brought unofficial pressure to bear on the State of Israel for the admission of Arab refugees, and also for the revision and alteration of existing frontiers in favour of the Arab states. Namir said that the Israeli government had rejected this intervention by the Americans on the grounds that it would help the Arab interventionists' intrigues against the State of Israel. At the same time Israel would insist on the continuation of direct negotiations with the Arab states.[1] At the end of the conversation, Namir, referring to his conversation with me on 19 May 1949 about recognition of the Red Shield of David as Israel's national [first aid] society, said that he was very pleased with the Soviet delegation's change of heart on this subject at the Geneva Conference.[2] However, he

---

Doc. 247

1. Namir responded that he had no information on additional arrests of Yiddish writers, but he assumed the rumours were essentially correct since after the liquidation of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee (see Doc. 205), not a single Yiddish writer had been seen in public. He did not consider publication of an item in *Davar* to be efficacious, preferring publication in the Jewish and general press abroad (see his telegram to Friedman, 13 June 1949, ISA 130.09/2325/2).

Doc. 248

1. See the note delivered by the US ambassador in Israel on 29 May 1949, *FRUS*, Vol. VI, pp. 1072–5; *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 4, Nos. 42, 64, pp. 75–7, 107–11.
2. At the international diplomatic conference in Switzerland sponsored by the International Committee of the Red Cross to discuss and formulate new conventions (21 April–12 August 1949), Israel attempted to achieve recognition of the Magen David Adom (the Red Shield of David) as an official symbol of mercy – equivalent to the red cross. Its application was rejected. The USSR and the Eastern bloc countries (except Hungary) voted against, in spite of promises to abstain (see Namir–Bakulin meetings, 21 April 1949, 19 May 1949, AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.3, d.5, ll.21, 24).

added that if the Soviet, Ukrainian and Belorussian delegations abstained from voting on the Israeli proposal, then according to the Israeli delegation's reckoning, fifteen delegations would vote in favour of recognizing the Red Shield of David as the national society of Israel, and fifteen against.

In this connection – Namir went on – as instructed by my ministry, I once again appeal to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the delegations of the USSR, Ukraine and Belorussia support our proposal. If for any reason the delegation of the USSR is unable to vote for the Israeli delegation's proposal, then it would be a good thing if the delegations of the Ukraine and Belorussia could vote for this proposal at the forthcoming plenary session.

I answered that I would bring Namir's request to the attention of the leadership of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The conversation lasted 10 minutes.

Second Secretary of the Near and Middle East Department Comrade Podvigin was present.

Director of the Near and Middle East Department
USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs
I. Bakulin

249
M.L. Mukhin to I.N. Bakulin (Moscow)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.4, D.29, LL.110, 118
Secret
Tel Aviv, 27 June 1949

To the Director of the Near and Middle East Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Comrade I.N. Bakulin,

I enclose the report of VOKS' authorized representative, Comrade Fedorin, on Soviet exhibitions in Israel, and I wish to draw your attention not only to the factual side of this business, which is very significant in itself for the direction to be taken in the development of political propaganda, but also to the new conditions which we are beginning to encounter as we carry on our activity through the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

I have already reported on the pressure exerted on the league by the government of Israel. This pressure is now getting stronger and has found expression in the governing party leadership's persistent effort to ensure that the former constitution of the league, containing points which are simply crammed with Zionist ideology, should be retained.[1] Moreover Friedman, the

1. See Doc. 245.

department head in the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, acting on behalf of the government, has summoned the leaders of the league, and told them bluntly that he is not satisfied with its present activity, since it is not sticking to the government's policy of 'neutrality', but comes out unconditionally in support of the USSR against the Anglo-American bloc.

Friedman went on to say in the last of these conversations that if the league did not mend its ways, government officials would not take part in its mass activities, and that he could assure its leadership that the Soviet legation in Israel would also not take part in them. Friedman said that if necessary, he was ready to talk to the legation officially about this.

We have also learned that at the forthcoming league congress, the Mapai leadership is preparing to wreck the aim of Mapam and the communists to organize the league on non-party principles, i.e., free membership on an individual basis.

In order to keep its overwhelming majority and influence in the league, Mapai wants to retain the principle of party representation in it on the basis of representation in the Knesset and Histadrut. In this way Mapai, which is worried by the league's activity, is trying to turn it into a reformist, toothless appendage to itself.

We consider that Mapai's position amounts to the destruction of the league as a body of real friends of the USSR who carry on an active struggle in the cause of peace.

In these conditions we think that we should use our links with progressive public figures to resist Mapai's policy, including the possibility of refusing it the right to take part formally in the work of the league.

I await your instructions.[2]

M. Mukhin

Bearing in mind the facts set out in Comrade Fedorin's report, and my own comments in the letter accompanying it, I would ask you to support our request to the board of VOKS to allocate funds to enable us to carry out our political activities.

M. M[ukhin]

2. At the top of the document the following handwritten note is appended: 'I.N. [Bakulin]. [Measures?] suggested by Mukhin were in fact implemented. We do not have anything to offer to the superiors. A. Shchiborin.' Endorsed by Bakulin on 4 July 1949.

APPENDIX

Copy
Secret

USSR Legation in Israel
To Member of the VOKS Board Comrade L.D. Kislova
Copy to: Near and Middle East Department, Comrade I.N. Bakulin

25 June 1949

I. *Report on the Organization of Soviet Exhibitions in Israel: 'The Military Skill of the Soviet Army' (Tel Aviv, 2 April–9 May 1949).*

On 2 April this year there was an opening ceremony of the exhibition 'The Military Skill of the Soviet Army' in Tel Aviv. (A report on the organization of this exhibition in Haifa in January–February this year has already been sent.) The opening was attended by prominent representatives of cultural and public life in Israel, civil servants, members of the Knesset and representatives of the government and of the Israeli army general staff, among others. Altogether more than 400 people attended.

All the speakers (representatives of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR, of the general staff etc.) noted the power of the Soviet army, its liberating role in World War II and its decisive role in the struggle for peace throughout the whole world. (Dr. Eisenstadt's speech is enclosed.)

The exhibition was arranged in one of the halls of the Habima theatre. The main wall was adorned with a portrait of Stalin and a large model of the Order of Victory, about 1.5 metres in diameter. On the other walls there were slogans about the Soviet army. The whole hall was attractively decorated with flowers. Special posters about the exhibition were hung all over the city. On these the exhibition was symbolized by two soldiers with a banner and weapons in their hands, [symbols] which were also reproduced on the invitations and the entrance tickets. A special token of the Order of Victory was issued with the words 'The Exhibition of "Military Skill of the Soviet Army"'.

Various cultural events were organized in connection with the exhibition:

1. In a separate room next to the exhibition hall, seating 300 people, Soviet films were shown. Altogether twenty Soviet films were shown, including *Berlin*, *Zoia*, *She Defends Her Motherland*, *Once Upon a Time There Was a Little Girl*, *Two Fighting Men*, *It Happened in the Donbass*, *The Pig-Tender and the Shepherd* and *Stone Flower*, among others.

2. Three concerts were organized. The programs were varied (excerpts from Soviet songs, music by Soviet composers, etc.).

3. Three lectures were given: 'The Soviet Army', 'The Heroism of the Soviet Army in Soviet Literature' and 'Biology in the USSR'.

4. Finally, special mention must be made of an evening devoted to the memory of Mayakovskii, which was organized on 15 April, the nineteenth

anniversary of the poet's death. The poet Alexander Penn spoke of Mayakovskii's life and work. Then he read several of Mayakovskii's poems, which he had translated into Hebrew. In the second half of the evening the Ron Workers' Choir sang Soviet songs – a song about Stalin, about the Soviet army and others. The evening was a great success.

The formal closure of the exhibition took place on Victory Day – 9 May.

The exhibition was a great success. About 12,000 people saw it (including over 3,500 soldiers), a very large figure for Israel.

Many Israeli newspapers (*Al hamishmar*, *Kol haam*, [*Haaretz*] and others) carried good reviews of the exhibition. Long articles about the exhibition were published in Jewish newspapers in other countries (France and Poland). Visitors to the exhibition rated it very highly, and it was a big and important event in Tel Aviv. Many progressive people in Israel commented on its timeliness as a reminder to warmongers that the Soviet army is strong and invincible.

It should be noted that the popularity of the exhibition was largely due to good organization, a good choice of premises, beautiful design, the functions accompanying the exhibition (films, lectures and concerts), poster advertisements, announcements in newspapers, etc. All this cost quite a lot of money. The total spent on organizing the exhibition was about £1,000. Of this, about £200 were paid for the premises; about £250 on the movie equipment and projectionist; more than £100 on posters, announcements in the press, invitations etc; about £100 on tidying the premises (cleaning and so on); and then there was expenditure for designing the exhibition, tax payments etc.

Since neither the Tel Aviv committee of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR nor the VOKS representative were able to cover even the most basic expenditures for mounting the exhibition, a charge for entry to the exhibition and to the films had to be made. This greatly reduced the number of visitors. The costs of the exhibition could not be fully covered by the sum received from the sale of tickets. Altogether the committee had a deficit of more than £250. (I enclose a translation of the article on the exhibition from the newspaper *Al hamishmar*, samples of invitations, tokens and newspapers published in Poland and France.)

II. *Russian and Soviet Art (Rishon Lezion, 2–28 April 1949)*

An exhibition of painting, sculpture and drawing was organized through the local committee of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR in the township of Rishon Lezion. The exhibition was put together from the albums *The All-Union Art Exhibition of 1947* and *The State Tretyakov Gallery*, issue no. 1.

The exhibition was held on the premises of the People's Palace. The formal opening took place on 14 April, and its closure on 28 April. In two weeks about two thousand people visited the exhibition. Of course, the entrance fee reduced the number of visitors.

The visitors showed great interest in Soviet art and expressed the wish to see a similar exhibition of original works. To accompany the exhibition there was a lecture on Russian and Soviet painting and two concerts of Soviet music (one of them on a gramophone). The Soviet film *At 6 p.m. after the War* was shown in a cinema seating 1,000.

The exhibition attracted very favourable reviews.

At the end of May this exhibition was organized in one of the big agricultural settlements (kibbutzim), Ein Hahoresh. In the course of a few days about 500 people came to see it, including members of neighbouring kibbutzim. To judge by the comments of the kibbutzniks, the exhibition was again a great success.

III. *Upbringing and Education in the USSR (Jerusalem, 28 April–18 May 1949)*
The Jerusalem Committee of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR organized an exhibition on 'Upbringing and Education' (a report has already been sent on the organization of this exhibition in Tel Aviv in January). The exhibition was seen by about 2,500 people.

IV. For the First of May we organized some small exhibitions at agricultural settlements on the achievements of the Soviet Union, using selections of photographs.

1. A selection of photographs on 'The Thirty-First Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution', at Kibbutz Ein Hahoresh.

2. A selection of photographs on 'State Childcare in the USSR', at Kibbutz Givat Haim.

Of course, we could not manage to see all these exhibitions ourselves. According to the responses of representatives of the kibbutzim, the settlers were greatly interested by them.

V. *Michurin's Doctrine – The Basis of Modern Biology*[3]
The exhibition of the album 'Michurin's Doctrine – The Basis of Modern Biology' in the kibbutzim deserves special mention. This exhibition has already been shown in ten kibbutzim. Together with the exhibition, there were lectures based on Academician T.D. Lysenko's report on the present state of biological science. The exhibition was a very great success. We are continuing to display it in other settlements.

Conclusion
In conclusion, it should be noted that the league shouldered the costs of all the events we organized. As a result the league incurred considerable debts to various institutions and individuals. For this reason it can not undertake any expenditure on the organization of events which cost a lot of money.

---

3. Lysenko and Michurin were leading Soviet biologists who rejected Mendelian genetics in favour of the doctrine of acquired characteristics. These ideas, which completely halted the development of Soviet genetics, were received positively by the political left in Israel.

As you know, since the Soviet legation has been in Israel (from August 1948), the VOKS board has allotted only 70 Israeli pounds for the work of their representative in Israel. As I have already said in earlier letters, lack of funds means that we can not subsidize, even modestly, the expenses which the league incurs in the organization of our events. Naturally, this lack of funds sometimes forces us to turn down the chance to organize very important functions. This is completely unjustified by the circumstances. The importance of the events which we arrange must not be underrated (the lectures mentioned above, exhibitions on the Soviet Union, concerts of music and songs by Soviet composers, showing Soviet films, etc.).

At present the Americans are beginning to increase their influence on the cultural life of the country. In addition to the financial aid which they give to the [Hebrew] University, the Tel Aviv Museum and the Union of Artists, they are beginning to organize various functions/events in Israel. On 19 June, for example, McDonald, the American ambassador in Israel, opened an exhibition of American painting and sculpture in Tel Aviv consisting of 145 original works. In his speech, McDonald expressed the hope that a similar exhibition of Jewish art would be put on in America in order to strengthen cultural links between Israel and the US.

Holding functions in Israel will help neutralize American influence and strengthen cultural links between the USSR and Israel.

Taking all this into account, I think it necessary that VOKS discuss this question and find funds for the future work of its representative in Israel.

Enclosure: as mentioned above.

Second Secretary of the USSR Legation in Israel
Fedorin

250
Meeting: A.Ia. Vyshinskii – M. Namir (Moscow, 29 June 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.4, L.12
Secret

At 13.00 I received Namir, the newly appointed minister of the State of Israel, who handed me a draft of his credentials.

When I asked about Mrs. Meyerson, Namir told me that she was handling a very difficult job dealing with Jewish immigration to Palestine.

Speaking of the general situation in Palestine, Namir said that there were considerable economic difficulties over the settlement of 220,000 new immigrants. Namir emphasized the need for the speediest possible settlement of the Negev so as to avoid Arab claims to this area.

As for the negotiations taking place in Lausanne,[1] Namir said that they had reached an impasse, due to the fact that the Jews could not accept the Arabs' demands for Arab refugees to be accepted before the conclusion of peace since that would mean letting a fifth column into the country. When I asked whether there were Arab troops on Palestinian territory, Namir told me that there were no Arab troops on Palestinian territory, except for one small place near the Syrian border.[2]

When I asked about Jerusalem, Namir answered that a *modus vivendi* had been reached with the Jews in New Jerusalem and the Arabs in Old Jerusalem.

Namir then raised the question of the desirability of increasing trade with the USSR, with credits to be granted by the Soviet Union. Namir mentioned that this question had already been raised by Mrs. Meyerson in her conversation with me before her departure.[3]

I replied that this was a major question, which would have to be discussed.

In conclusion Namir said he was instructed by his government to offer an official invitation for a representative of the Soviet Union to make a friendship visit to the State of Israel. 'Please don't take this as interference in your internal affairs', Namir added jokingly, 'but our people and government would be particularly pleased to have as our guest Andrei Andreevich Gromyko, whose name is known to every schoolchild in Israel.'[4]

I thanked Namir and, promising to pass on the invitation to the Soviet government, said that, speaking unofficially, it was not our custom to send government delegations to other countries on friendship visits.[5]

The conversation lasted 20 minutes. Comrade Gorokhov was present.[6]

A. Vyshinskii

---

1. See Doc. 243, n. 1.
2. See Doc. 251, and n. 3 there.
3. See Doc. 239.
4. Sharett explained this official invitation to Gromyko as follows: a) his immense popularity in Israel, having delivered the first speech indicating Soviet support for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine; b) the need to clarify issues on the agenda of the forthcoming UN General Assembly; and c) the need to offset many recent visits to Israel by American and British officials (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel,* Vol. 4, No. 109, p. 181).
5. For Namir's account of this meeting, see Doc. 251. See also Doc. 257.
6. Copies to Stalin, Molotov, Beria, Malenkov, Mikoian, Kaganovich, Bulganin, Kosygin, Gromyko, Zorin, and Podtserob.

251
M. Namir to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 30 June 1949

Pursuant to clear 633.[1] Vyshinskii was very pleasant and cordial as in previous conversations. The conversation developed like a criss-cross of questions on his part and my replies. Following is a general summary: To begin with, he asked about Golda [Meyerson] and her duties. When the time came for me to explain about housing for new immigrants, I apprised him of their number and of the need to direct the immigration to all professions and all parts of the country in order to ensure a healthy national economy and to populate the country quickly for the sake of our security, especially the Negev, [an area] which will continue to whet the appetite of foreign countries as long as it remains desolate. Vyshinskii remarked that the irrigation of the Negev would require immense sums. I related that the Jews of the world were helping a great deal and that the state itself was doing all in its power along progressive lines, but the assistance of friendly countries in the form of loans was also essential, and I reiterated Golda's request to initiate extensive commercial relations on a credit basis. Vyshinskii repeated his promise to look into the matter.[2] His other questions concerned Syria and Mishmar Hayarden,[3] Jerusalem, and the situation at Lausanne. I explained and elaborated our position especially as regards the Arab refugees, and my reply was in the spirit of your statement in the Knesset.[4] Here Vyshinskii said (more or less like Zorin, whose remarks I cabled on 5 May)[5] that we were showing undue modesty in evaluating our achievements, that our situation was good, and that there was no room for concern. I replied that we were pleased at our friends' satisfaction, but in some cases they saw our current situation in a rosier light than did we on the spot. True, the war had ended but as yet there was no

1. Not traced.
2. See Doc. 239.
3. Mishmar Hayarden, settlement north of the Sea of Galilee, and well inside the international border of Palestine, had been occupied by Syrian forces. In the course of the cease-fire negotiations with Syria, Israel insisted on a Syrian withdrawal. Eventually, the Syrians withdrew and the place was included in the demilitarized zone.
4. On 15 June, opening the Knesset debate on Israel's foreign policy, Sharett outlined its main contours. Regarding the territorial question, he stated that Israel would oppose any attempt to revert to the UN partition borders, warning particularly against 'a renewed attempt to encroach upon Israel's sovereignty in the southern Negev'. Concerning the refugee problem, he reiterated that Israel would be willing to pay compensation for abandoned lands and to admit a certain number of refugees, mainly in the context of reunification of families but only within the framework of a peace agreement (see *Divrei haknesset*, Vol. I, pp. 717–22).
5. Reference is to Zorin's optimistic survey of Israel's achievements and position given at the legation's party in Moscow on 5 May on the occasion of the first anniversary of Israeli independence (see Namir to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 5 May 1949, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 4, No. 11, pp. 27–8).

peace, and there were threats of revenge, encouraged perhaps in part, externally, and we were obliged to be vigilant and work diligently to increase our strength in all areas quickly for the sake of peace and security. Vyshinskii agreed with me.

At the conclusion of the talk I passed on your invitation to Gromyko together with your considerations.[6] Vyshinskii offered profuse thanks for the invitation which did him honour and said he must raise the subject for discussion. However, confidentially, and absolutely not, repeat not to pass this on to you – he must make clear that it was not the Soviet Union's custom to dispatch official government emissaries within the framework of courtesy or friendship visits, but on specific occasions only for a particular, concrete matter, such as a commercial treaty or the like. They broke this rule temporarily only during the war years, when their special emissaries visited the Allies. He doubts whether his government will agree to set a new precedent even for such an honourable invitation as ours. To convince me further, he mentioned another matter that illustrated the differences in their diplomatic practices as compared with other countries, namely, that it was absolutely forbidden for representatives of the Soviet government to receive medals of honour from foreign countries, a rule which caused the representatives great consternation. Finally, he requested not, repeat not, to convey his private opinion to you but to await an official reply. They may decide not to accept, but under no circumstances should this be seen as signifying a lack of appreciation for your invitation but just strict adherence to standing procedure. On the other hand, the VOKS society sometimes sends cultural or artistic representatives abroad, but not in the name of the government. My conclusion – we should assume that they will not, repeat not, accept the invitation. However, in terms of our relations with the Soviet Union the [invitation] completely fulfilled its positive mission, because it was to Vyshinskii's overt satisfaction. When we spoke about Golda I did not mention her visit to America or the names of the American guests in Israel.[7] The conversation did not, repeat not, necessitate this.

Shalom.

Namir

6. See Doc. 250 and n. 4 there.
7. Reference may be to a delegation headed by Jacob S. Potofsky, president of the CIO Amalgamated Clothing Workers, which met with Golda Meyerson at that time.

252
L. Kislova to Ia.M. Lomakin (Moscow)

COPY: GARF, F.5283, OP.22, D.194, LL.39–42
Moscow, 4 July 1949
Secret

To the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the USSR (Bolsheviks), Comrade Ia.M. Lomakin,

At the request of Comrade Tishin, I am enclosing information that we have about the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR in the State of Israel.
Enclosure: the above mentioned on four pages

Member of the Board of VOKS
L. Kislova

Secret

MEMORANDUM
The League for Friendly Relations with the USSR

The League for Friendly Relations with the USSR was formed in 1946 on the basis of the already existing V League. The secretary-general of the league was a member of the Mapam Party Central Committee, Tarnopoler. The league is directed by a central committee consisting of representatives of various Israeli parties: the Communist Party, the Labour Party (Mapai), the United Labour Party (Mapam) and other parties. The principle of party representation enabled right-wing elements, that is, the Mapai Party, to dominate, which, in effect, led to a weakening of the league's work. We therefore can not consider the league as a type of society for cultural ties and friendship with the USSR, which unites broad strata of the Jewish population, party and non-party progressive figures from Israeli science, culture and art.

At present, the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR, together with the VOKS representative, is carrying out preparatory work to reorganize the league and turn it into a more active organization. Soon there will be a proposal to convene a league conference at which a new statute will be adopted and a new leadership selected for the organization.

The work of VOKS in the State of Israel began after the establishment of diplomatic relations between the USSR and the State of Israel with the arrival of the USSR legation in Tel Aviv in August 1948.

The VOKS representative in Israel relies chiefly on the league; together they organize various programs to popularize the achievements of the Soviet Union: a VOKS photography exhibition, the screening of Soviet films, lectures and reports on Soviet life and culture and so forth.

Thus, on 1 January 1949, an exposition opened in Tel Aviv, 'Upbringing and Education in the USSR', organized jointly by the VOKS representative and

the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR. At the exposition, representatives of the Israeli intelligentsia delivered five lectures: 'Lenin, Teacher of Generations', 'Upbringing and Education in the USSR', 'Modern Soviet Literature', 'Soviet Theatre', and 'Soviet Cinema'. Four Soviet films were shown and four musical–literary evenings were organized with the participation of local performers. The exposition and related cultural events attracted the attention of the entire Israeli press. Several newspapers (*Kol haam*, *Al hamishmar*, *Davar*, *Haaretz*, and *Haolam hazeh*) published positive reviews of the exposition and articles about education and upbringing in the Soviet Union.

On 28 April 1949, the same exposition was organized in Jerusalem jointly with the Jerusalem Committee of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR on the premises of the People's House [Beit Haam]. About 500 people attended the opening, including deputies of Israel's Constituent Assembly,[1] municipal representatives, representatives of the General Federation of Jewish Workers (Histadrut), of political parties and public organizations, educators, and cultural and scientific figures. Weizmann, a member of the local committee of the league, opened the exposition. He spoke of the enormous successes of the Soviet Union in education and enlightenment. Speakers noted how in the multinational Soviet Union science and culture were flourishing to serve the people, and they called upon figures in science and education in Israel to unite to defend peace.

An exhibition, 'The Military Art of the Red Army', was opened in Haifa on 8 January 1949. It was organized by the VOKS representatives together with the Haifa committee of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

About 5,000 people visited the exhibition in 15 days, more than half of whom were soldiers or officers in the Israeli army. A lecture, 'The Soviet Army in Soviet Literature', was read, and books and journals on the exhibition topic were displayed. Lecturers from the league, chiefly from the ranks of the Israeli army, gave explanations at the exhibition. Large articles with detailed descriptions of the exhibition appeared in several Israeli newspapers (*Al hamishmar*, *Davar*, and others). They noted the heroic struggle of the Soviet army against fascist occupation and expressed gratitude to the Soviet Union for defeating Hitler's Germany.

On 2 April 1949, this same exhibition was organized in Tel Aviv jointly with the Tel Aviv committee of the league. The opening of the exposition was attended by members of the Constituent Assembly, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the army staff, public organizations, and also figures from the spheres of culture and the arts.

The speakers described the great contribution of the Soviet army to the defeat of fascism, stressing the liberating role of the Soviet army – an army of

1. The Constituent Assembly became the Knesset on 16 February 1949.

a new type. They also noted that the exposition was very timely as it demonstrated the might and military art of the Soviet army. The Soviet army is a faithful guardian and bastion of peace throughout the world. A member of the Tel Aviv committee of the league, Dr. Eisenstadt, called on progressive forces in Israel to mobilize for the defence of peace. On the first day about 1,500 visited the exposition. In this connection, Soviet films were shown, lectures were delivered about the Soviet army and concerts of Soviet music were held. All the exhibitions enjoyed great success in Israel.

Iu. Kosiakina

253
I.N. Bakulin to N.M. Shvernik (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.10, LL. 3–13
Moscow, 5 July 1949
Top Secret

To the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Comrade N.M. Shvernik,

In connection with the forthcoming presentation of credentials by the newly appointed minister of the State of Israel, Mordecai Namir, I am enclosing brief information about the State of Israel and a biography of Minister Namir.

Director of the Near and Middle East Department
Foreign Ministry of the USSR
I.N. Bakulin

Secret

PROFILE OF THE NEWLY APPOINTED MINISTER OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL IN THE USSR MORDECAI NAMIR[1]

Namir was born in 1897 in the village of Bratoliubovka, Kherson Oblast.

Before the revolution, he graduated from the economics faculty of Odessa University and studied violin at the Odessa Conservatory. During the revolution, he was one of the leaders of the Zionist youth organization in Odessa. He was arrested and after his release in 1924, he left for Palestine.

In Palestine Namir participated actively in the Zionist movement. He is a member of the Israel Labour Party, Mapai.

1. On 28 April 1949 Deputy Foreign Minister Zorin sent letters to Deputy Minister of State Security S.I. Ogol'tsov (AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.3, d.10, l.2) and to P.V. Fedotov (AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.3, d.10, l.2), requesting their opinion on Namir's appointment. The two last paragraphs of the text are their conclusions.

As soon as the State of Israel was formed, he departed for People's Democracies – Romania and Czechoslovakia – to deal with matters of Jewish immigration to Palestine.

In 1948 Mr. Namir arrived in the USSR as a counsellor of the State of Israel.

Namir has relatives in the Soviet Union – his mother and sister live in Kherson and his wife's sister in Odessa.

According to available information, the Mapai party leadership instructed Namir upon his departure to the USSR to establish contacts with Jewish nationalists in the Soviet Union. With their help, he was to instil in Soviet Jews a desire to immigrate to the State of Israel.

In the meantime, however, according to Ministry of State Security data, there is no information about any nationalistic activity by Namir during his stay in the USSR.

I. Bakulin

APPENDIX

The State of Israel[2]

On 14 May 1948, on the basis of the UN General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947, and in connection with the termination of the British Mandate, a Jewish state named Israel was created in Palestine. The area of this state, according to the UN's plan, was to be 14,100 square km. In November 1948, the population of the State of Israel was 782,000 persons. Of these, 713,000 were Jews.

From 14 May 1948, when the State of Israel was formed, until 25 January 1949, the Jewish National Council in Palestine functioned as a provisional state council, and the provisional government which it formed acted as its executive arm.

[...][3]

The State of Israel has a modern army, consisting of an air force, tank units, artillery, and other forms of modern armament. Israel has universal conscription between the ages of 18 and 40 for men, and from 18 to 26 for women without children.

Even before the State of Israel was formed, the Jewish Agency for Palestine devoted considerable attention to the immigration of Jews to Palestine, a problem which still greatly occupies the Israeli government. According to official data, 120,312 immigrants arrived in Israel in 1948; 27,756 of them in

2. This text borrows extensively from an internal memorandum of the Near and Middle East Department dated 8 June 1949 and filed under AVP RF, f.089, op.2, d.27, l.1.
3. Several paragraphs dealing with the composition of the Israeli government and characteristics of the Israeli political parties have been omitted.

December of that year. In the first quarter of 1949 about 75,000 arrived. Most of the immigrants came from Eastern Europe. Altogether, according to the plan for 1949, no fewer than 150,000 Jews are expected. Hence, if the Israeli government fulfils its plan for immigration, the population of Israel will amount to about one million persons by the end of 1949.

As a result of British domination and the Arab–Israeli war, the Israeli economy has been largely undermined. The arable area and the production of food and basic necessities for the people have been reduced. In this connection, the country suffers from a considerable shortage of food, which is distributed through a strict system of rationing. Speculation and inflation flourish. Recently, unemployment has increased.

The Israeli government has created a centre for coordinating the economy, which will be responsible mainly for the struggle against inflation and the rising cost of living. But so far there have been no perceptible improvements in economic life. The working classes of both the Jewish and Arab populations are suffering unimaginable difficulties and hardships.

In foreign trade, citrus fruits occupy an important place. By the end of March this year, 5.5 million cases of citrus fruits had been exported. The citrus harvest is expected to reach 9 million cases in 1949 and up to 12–14 million the following season.

On 16 August 1948, the introduction of a new monetary system was announced. Previously the Palestinian pound was in use, linked to the pound sterling. The new currency is called the 'Israeli pound', and is equal to the Palestinian pound and the pound sterling.

Reactionary circles in governmental institutions pursue an anti-democratic policy towards progressive organizations and people. The Ministry of the Interior refused the Palestinian League of National Liberation's request to publish the newspaper *al-Ittihad*, which had been closed down by the British in March 1948; it has arrested the leaders of the Congress of Arab Workers; and it dismisses communists and democratically inclined people from the state apparatus.

By now the State of Israel has been recognized by 53 states and has been admitted to the UN. The government of the US recognized the State of Israel de facto on 15 May 1948, and *de jure* a few months later. The US is particularly active in strengthening its positions in Israel. American penetration began when the British were still in power. In 1937, American investment in Israel amounted to 37 million dollars, and in 1945, to 150 million dollars. However, US policy on the Palestine question is contradictory. This may be explained by the fact that, on one hand, there is an influential group of Jewish bourgeoisie living in the US, which supported the formation of the State of Israel and demanded that American ruling circles both recognize the state and grant it all possible aid. On the other hand, heavy pressure is being brought to bear on these circles by interests representing the major oil companies, which are interested in the Arab countries' sources of oil. Early in 1949 the US Import–Export Bank gave a loan of 100 million dollars to the State of Israel.

In foreign policy the government of Israel is oriented towards the US. Moshe Sharett, the foreign minister, openly stated on 15 August at a conference of Socialist Zionists: 'We have the right to hope that the USSR will understand that the State of Israel, as a country of mass immigration and widespread settlement, can not be created without the Jews of America – or without the American government.'

The British government recognized the State of Israel de facto at the end of January 1949. On the Palestine question it is pursuing its old policy with some slight changes. Earlier on, it could reckon that the war between Israel and the Arabs would result in both sides asking Britain to restore order. Now that the State of Israel has been created and exists, the British are struggling to bring under their control, if not the whole of Palestine, at least part of it by annexing it to Transjordan. This is something on which the position of the Israeli government, too, has changed several times.

From the first day of the discussion of the Palestine question at the UN, the USSR has taken a consistent and principled stand. On 29 November the Soviet delegation voted for the partition of Palestine and for the formation there of two democratic independent states – one Arab and one Jewish – and continues to believe that the Palestine problem can be settled on the basis of these decisions of the General Assembly.

On 18 May 1948, the Soviet government decided to grant official recognition to the State of Israel and its provisional government, and on 24 May 1948, to exchange diplomatic missions. The Soviet Union's clear and straightforward policy on the Palestine question met with greatly increased sympathy among the population at large and in the Israeli army, in spite of the efforts of the right wing of the ruling party, supported by representatives of other bourgeois and religious parties, to belittle the significance and role of the USSR in the formation of the State of Israel.

According to information available to us, the Israeli legation in Moscow, which is staffed by members of Mapai, has tried to establish widespread links to the Jews of the USSR, in order to create and popularize the idea of immigration among Soviet Jews. Comrade V.A. Zorin, deputy minister of foreign affairs of the USSR, delivered a verbal statement to Mrs. Meyerson, the former Israeli minister to the USSR, about the illegal activity of the Israeli legation in urging Soviet citizens to renounce Soviet citizenship and distributing the legation's information bulletin to public organizations and individual Soviet citizens.[4] At present reactionary circles in Israel publish anti-Soviet articles in the [Israeli] press, and try to undermine the authority of the Soviet Union in Israel.

The Arab states have taken the position that a Jewish state in Palestine should not be permitted, and demand the conversion of Palestine into a single Arab state in which Jews would have the right to local autonomy. From 15 May 1948 through January 1949, Arab troops went into action against Israel.

4. See Docs. 219 and 220.

However, not only did the Jews defend the frontiers of their state, but also occupied a part of Palestine which the UN decision had allocated to the Arab state. The Israeli government now lays claim to this territory.

On 24 February 1949, Israel and Egypt signed an armistice agreement; in April an armistice agreement was signed with Transjordan and Lebanon, and negotiations are going on for an armistice with Syria. In addition, since April 1949 negotiations have been taking place in Lausanne between the State of Israel and the Arab countries, except Iraq, with the participation of the UN Conciliation Commission for a peaceful settlement of the Palestine problem. The Arabs are insisting that Israel accept the Arab refugees and hand over to them the territory that the Jews have seized beyond the frontiers of Israel established by the UN. The Jews do not accept the Arabs' proposal. The negotiations have reached an impasse.

I. Bakulin

254
M. Namir to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 8 July 1949

(a) In the course of a conversation at a ceremony[1] with Shvernik and Gromyko, the former asked questions which exhibited interest and attentiveness, and I replied; he took an interest in issues of *aliya*, industry, the employment situation, housing, immigrant absorption, demography and Arab refugees. My replies amounted to a concise lecture which generated interventions and direct questions. I took advantage of Gromyko's presence and reiterated the urgency of settling the Negev because it is 'badly situated',[2] and the fact that its emptiness arouses an appetite for [military] bases; we need large investments and much *matériel* on credit, which we also requested from Vyshinskii, and are awaiting his reply. Under the rubric of population I also provided statistics on immigration and the number of Arab refugees, and I was cautious as per your directive in cable 154.[3]

(b) Shvernik drank it all in thirstily. Gromyko intervened twice: (1) on settling the Negev he said with great animation that this was the way to restrain

1. On the occasion of Namir's presentation of credentials as Israel's minister to the USSR.
2. Namir cabled the Russian term, *plokho lezhit*.
3. Sharett instructed Namir to prepare the groundwork should Israel eventually specify the number of refugees it would be ready to admit upon the attainment of peace, beyond the 25,000 refugees already admitted and the 10,000 who would most probably fall within the framework of family reunification (see his telegram to Namir, 3 July 1949, ISA 130.09/2325/3).

foreign desires for penetration; (2) in connection with the number of Jews, which grew by a third in a short time, Gromyko stopped me in the middle and himself explained to Shvernik that this was unprecedented in history, and at the end of the conversation he repeated this. The atmosphere during the conversation was very good. Shalom.

Namir

255
Meeting: A.A. Gromyko – M. Namir (Moscow, 11 July 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.022, OP.2A, P.12, D.4, L.17
Moscow, 11 July 1949
Secret

Namir stated that he was paying a formal visit.

I told him that he should not find his duties as minister too difficult, since he was not a newcomer.

Namir said that he was certainly familiar with the situation. Serving as chargé d'affaires in the Israeli legation for nine months had helped him to get to know the terrain and made it easier for him in his present post as minister.

Namir went on to say that he wanted to touch on one or two matters of substance. First, he was interested in a question which had been raised earlier, namely the possibility that Israel might be granted a loan by the Soviet Union. He added that he had discussed this a few days ago with Comrade Vyshinskii.[1]

I answered that I knew about his conversation with Comrade Vyshinskii. I went on to say that the question was being studied, but that I was not yet in a position to give him a definite answer at present.

Namir asked for this matter to be resolved as soon as possible, since the Israeli government wanted to maintain trade relations with the Soviet Union.

Namir said that he had appealed to the Soviet Union to support Israel's application for membership in the Universal Postal Union.[2] He said that the Soviet Union had already supported the same application at the end of 1948, but that it had not received the necessary majority of votes, since some states had either voted against the admission of Israel to the union or had abstained, which could also be regarded as a negative vote. In view of this outcome of the vote on its first application, the government had decided to make a second request. Now that the State of Israel was recognized by many countries, there was a better chance that the application would receive the necessary number of votes.

---

1. See Doc. 251.
2. See Doc. 189.

I answered Namir that there could be no doubt that the Soviet Union would take the same view of this matter as it had when Israel's first application to join the Universal Postal Union was considered.[3]

Lastly, Namir reminded me of the invitiation which he had issued to Comrade Vyshinskii and which had also been issued by Sharett, the minister of foreign affairs, for a Soviet friendship mission to be sent to Israel.[4]

I answered that I knew about this invitation, but that I could not reply to it at present.

So ended the conversation.

USSR Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
A. Gromyko

256
Meeting: B.F. Podtserob – M. Namir (Moscow, 12 July 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.4, L.14
Secret

Namir came to see me for a formal visit on his own initiative.

After an exchange of formal courtesies, Namir said that the post of minister in the Soviet Union was not entirely unfamiliar to him. He had been minister of the legation and had therefore gradually found his way in Israeli–Soviet relations while Mrs. Meyerson was still here.

When I asked which position Mrs. Meyerson held in the government, Namir said that she was minister of labour, social welfare and housing. This was one of the most difficult jobs in the government, Namir added, especially with regard to the housing problem. A large number of immigrants had to be settled in Israel. But housing construction had been halted as a result of military activity, which had also required large sums of money. Nevertheless, the government of Israel hoped to overcome the difficulties it was facing over housing within five or ten years. In particular, Israel was counting on credits from the Soviet Union for building materials and technology. The appropriate application had been submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Trade. Namir went on:

We are an importing country. We count on importing a large quantity of various goods from the Soviet Union. In a little while we shall be able to give the Soviet Union a list of those goods which we would like to deliver to it.

3. See also Doc. 270.
4. See Docs. 250 and 251.

Namir asked me whether the post of secretary-general at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had existed for a long time. I answered that it had existed until 1943, and had been revived recently.

In conclusion I wished Namir success in his work as minister in the Soviet Union.

The conversation lasted 15 minutes.

Secretary-General of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs
B. Podtserob

257
A.Ia. Vyshinskii to I.V. Stalin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.07, OP.22A, P.11, D.166, L.5
Moscow, 14 July 1949

To Comrade I.V. Stalin,

On 29 June, Namir, the minister of the State of Israel in Moscow, told me that he had instructions from his government to convey an official invitation for the Soviet Union to send a representative to the State of Israel on a visit of friendship.

Namir said that the people and government of Israel would be particularly pleased to welcome Comrade Gromyko on such a visit.

On 7 July, Sharett, the Israeli minister of foreign affairs, issued the same invitation to Comrade Mukhin, the USSR chargé d'affaires in Tel Aviv, and on 11 July, Namir repeated it in his conversation with Comrade Gromyko.[1]

I think that the government of Israel intends to use this friendship visit by a representative of the Soviet government to strengthen its position in future bargaining with the US and Britain, with the aim of getting both a new loan and also some relaxation of the Anglo-Saxon pressure over frontiers, Arab refugees and Jerusalem. Aside from that, this visit will be used by official propaganda to raise the prestige of the reactionary ruling party Mapai among the popular masses inside the country.

In addition, a visit to Israel by a Soviet representative would arouse a great many false rumours abroad, which the US and Britain would undoubtedly use in an effort to increase their influence in the Arab countries and to worsen our relations with them.

In view of all this, the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers it unwise to send a special Soviet representative on a friendship visit to Israel, and proposes to give a negative reply to the government of Israel on the grounds that the Soviet government does not send special missions to other countries.

I should be grateful for your approval.[2]

A. Vyshinskii

1. See Doc. 255.
2. Sent to Molotov, Beria, Malenkov, Mikoian, Kaganovich, Bulganin and Kosygin.

258
Sh. Eliashiv (Friedman) to M. Namir (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/3
Tel Aviv, 24 July 1949

In Milan the Histadrut delegation[1] had a lengthy conversation with Kuznetsov and Korneev. They would like the Histadrut to remain in the organization, showed readiness to make contact with Western workers and opposed our delegation's wish to bring the *aliya* question before the plenum. On Kuznetsov's initiative and under his chairmanship we met with the Romanians and Hungarians, who promised to support our demands *vis-à-vis* their governments and asked for a memorandum from our delegation. This is the first time that Soviet representatives agreed to take part in a discussion of our demands for *aliya* from the bloc countries. Kuznetsov expressed his aspiration to resolve the problem to the satisfaction of all.

Eliashiv

259
Memorandum by A.S. Semioshkin

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.5, D.6, LL.22–4
Tel Aviv, 8 August 1949
Secret

REPORT ON THE VISIT TO NAZARETH AND TIBERIAS ON 2–4 AUGUST 1949 BY A.S. SEMIOSHKIN, ATTACHÉ OF THE LEGATION, AND ARCHIMANDRITE LEONID

I. *The Question of Property*
In Nazareth the Ecclesiastical Mission owns a garden on the central street. At present this plot of land is cut in two by a road, and the larger part of it has for a long time been let to the owner of a little restaurant built on the plot.

The Palestine Society has a large house – the Muskubiyya – in the town, where all the governmental institutions are to be found (the governor, police, customs, post office etc.). Beside this building there is a space with a small

1. The second congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions was held in Milan from 29 June to 10 July 1949. Most Western trade unions had left the federation earlier that year on the grounds that it was under communist control. They convened a constituent conference in Geneva to establish an alternative organization. The Israeli General Federation of Labour (Histadrut) sent a delegation to the Milan conference and an observer to the Geneva Conference. See also Doc. 298.

house (the Magli). Before the First World War, on one of the hills surrounding Nazareth, the society bought a very large piece of land alongside the road to Mount Tabor, in order to build a high school. This is currently a barren tract of land. In the centre of the town is the so-called seminary garden (a garden with an old two-storey lodge) which is let to an Arab woman.

In Kafr Kana the Ecclesiastical Mission owns a garden beside a spring on the road between Tiberias and Nazareth. The Arabs who rent this piece of land have built some temporary living quarters on it. The area of the plot is evidently 5,000–6,000 square metres (and not 1,800 as in the British note).[1] The society has a plot here, surrounded with a stone wall; there are neither buildings nor trees on the plot.

Near the ruined Arab village of Lubiya there is a plot belonging to the Ecclesiastical Mission, which is covered with olive trees.

In Tiberias on the quayside there is a very old house belonging to the Ecclesiastical Mission. It has been damaged by explosions in the neighbouring buildings.

Between Majdal and Tiberias, the Church has a large garden on the shore of the lake near the mineral water springs. This plot is divided into two halves; according to the Russians who live there, the northern half was cut off and allocated to a neighbour through court action.

Sheiko, who now lives in the Majdal garden, told us (an elderly Russian women also remember this) that the mission had a large plot in Tiberias near the hot springs, but Fr. Meletii (who was then in charge of the mission's affairs) refused to pay a tax of five pounds,[2] and the plot apparently reverted to the municipality. The mission also had a small plot of land to the left of the road from Nazareth to Tiberias. These plots are not listed as belonging to the Ecclesiastical Mission in the British note, but information about them needs to be verified.

We called on the mayor of Tiberias about our property. He promised to repair the house on the quayside if the costs were not too great; and if they were, he promised to appeal to the government of Israel for help.

II. *Russian Influence among the Arabs*

Before the First World War, the Orthodox community of Nazareth received a great deal of financial assistance from Russian institutions. The Palestine Society ran over 100 schools in Palestine and Syria; and in the 1880s, a seminary was opened in a rented building,[3] with up to forty students, who were given full board and lodging.

Elderly Arabs told us about the very high standard of teaching: the Arabs who had been through our schools were the best educated people, even in

---

1. On the Soviet-British exchange of notes regarding Russian property in Palestine, see Doc. 53.
2. An urban property tax that was to be paid to the British authorities.
3. Reference is to a teachers' seminary for men.

their knowledge of Arabic. Special textbooks in Arabic were issued for Russian schools in Palestine.[4] Russia also defended Christian Arabs *vis-à-vis* the Turkish government. After the First World War, the White Palestine Society stopped giving any help to the Arabs. Antonii, the last head of the émigré Ecclesiastical Mission never once conducted a service in a church in Nazareth.

At present there is only one government school for Orthodox pupils, but the Americans and the Catholics are opening their own schools in order to bring Orthodox Arabs over to their side. We are told that the Americans have already bought a plot of land near Nazareth on which to build a high school.

Orthodox Arabs have always looked to Russia as their protector, and when Archimandrite Leonid visited Nazareth, they tried to persuade him to renew Russian activity both by opening schools and by defending Christians (concerning refugees, the restoration of property, etc.).

However, one should also note the powerful influence of the Communist Party among the Arab population of Palestine, especially young people. The communist newspaper *al-Ittihad* has a circulation of 2,500–3,000 (that is the pre-war figure which has not declined, although the number of Arabs in Palestine has fallen to a tenth of what it was), while *al-Yawm*, the government newspaper in Arabic, is published in no more than 200–300 copies.

Our interests require that when we receive the Palestine Society's property, part of the income be devoted to education among the Arabs, since we have here a very favourable opportunity to increase Arab sympathy for the USSR.

III. *Church Matters*

The Arab Orthodox clergy has long been engaged in a silent struggle with the Greek priests because the Greek Patriarchate puts Greeks in charge of its parishes. At the same time, the Arabs get no help or protection from the Greeks. That is why in Nazareth and Acre, for instance, there are no Greek metropolitans, and the patriarchate sends only temporary representatives, who are replaced when friction between the Greek and Arab clergy becomes particularly severe. This hostility to the Greeks could be seen at the reception given for Archimandrite Leonid, when an Arab priest proposed a toast to Patriarch Aleksei, but not to the Greek Patriarch of Jerusalem Timotheos.[5]

Bearing in mind our property interests in the Arab part of Palestine and the mutual relations which history has created between the Orthodox Churches here, we must obviously maintain normal relations with the representatives of the Greek Church now, while at the same time strengthening the influence of the Moscow Patriarchate among the Arabs.

Attaché of the Legation
Semioshkin

---

4. On the educational network established by the Palestine Society, see Hopwood, *The Russian Presence in Syria and Palestine*.
5. For Timotheos, see Doc. 137.

260
Memorandum by I. Bakulin and G.T. Zaitsev

COPY: AVP RF, F.0118, OP.2, P.3, D.13, LL.144–8
Moscow, 31 August 1949
Secret

POINTS FOR A SPEECH ON THE QUESTION OF ASSISTANCE TO PALESTINIAN REFUGEES[1]

1. The question of Palestinian refugees is an inextricable part of the Palestine problem as a whole. A radical solution of this question, as of the whole problem, depends now on the earliest possible implementation of that part of the UN General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947 dealing with the creation of an independent Arab state on the territory of the Arab part of Palestine, which would make it possible for a large number of refugees to return to their homes and to peaceful productive labour.

2. The problem of the Palestinian refugees arose from the policies of certain monopolistic circles in Britain and the US. These people are interested in dragging out a solution of the Palestine problem, by trying to revise the UN General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947, in order to ensure for themselves advantageous military, strategic and economic positions at the expense of the Arab and Jewish peoples' interests.

3. It is well known that imperialist circles in Britain and the US, by their policy of undermining a peaceful settlement of the Palestine question and their efforts to amend the UN General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947, have created conditions for military conflict in Palestine. This has brought the Jewish and Arab peoples great suffering, and has resulted in the Palestinian refugee problem. In this connection the Egyptian newspaper *Sawt al-Umma* wrote on 19 March 1949 that 'the aggressive policy of the US is the prime cause of the tragedy which has afflicted the Arab refugees'.

4. Now these same circles, whose efforts actually created the Palestinian refugee problem, are trying to use the suffering of the victims of their policy for their own purposes. For this they continue to resist a general peaceful settlement in Palestine, replacing it with their own palliative and specious measures, which can only partially alleviate the disastrous situation of the refugees, and can neither eliminate it nor solve the problem as a whole.

5. It follows from reports in the international press that the problem of the Palestinian refugees has become a matter for underhanded dealing and a means of exerting pressure on the Jewish and Arab governments. The UN

1. Prepared by the Middle East Department for the Soviet delegation to the Fourth Session of the UN General Assembly. The Palestine issue appeared on the agenda of this session under three headings: the Establishment of an International Regime in Jerusalem, Protection of the Holy Places, and the Question of Palestinian Refugees.

Conciliation Commission, as was to be expected, has turned into an instrument of monopolistic circles in the US, who are trying to dictate their own solution to the problem. This has meant drawing up one new plan after another, which has complicated the situation in Palestine, and has delayed a general solution of the Palestine question.

6. These are the reasons which explain why the Conciliation Commission does not speak the language of the UN, but that of the ruling circles in the US. The press tells us that on 31 July, Porter, the US representative on the UN Conciliation Commission, let himself promise the Arab countries immediate assistance in dollars if they would agree to accept a certain number of refugees. The press has reported more than once that the ruling circles in the US are putting great pressure on the Israeli government. The existence of this pressure was also confirmed on 29 July 1949, by the memorandum of Mr. Eban, Israel's representative at the UN.[2]

7. On this matter the newspaper *Al hamishmar* (Tel Aviv) reported on 29 June [19]49:

> All questions connected with the achievement of peace between the Jewish and Arab states – questions of frontiers, the future of Jerusalem, refugees – are discussed by the Americans as if the United States, and not the United Nations, were the legitimate international institution to give advice on the Palestine question. The US regards Palestine as its own particular sphere of influence, and President Truman issues ultimatum-like demands to the Israeli government, while 'mediators' and 'reconcilers' do all they can to prevent direct contact between the Jews and Arabs in Lausanne.

8. The UN Conciliation Commission does not listen to the demands of the Palestinian refugees themselves. This can be seen from the decision of the Congress of Arab Refugees, which took place on 28 July 1949 in the Lebanese town of Zahla.[3] At this congress representatives of the Arab refugees who are now in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Transjordan and the Arab part of Palestine supported the resolution of the UN General Assembly of 29 November 1947, categorically rejected the Bernadotte plan and opposed the partition of the Arab part of Palestine between the Arab states or its annexation to any of those states. The congress supported the creation of an independent state in the Arab part of Palestine and opposed plans to settle the refugees where they currently resided, considering such plans to be machinations of foreign imperialists.

---

2. Reference is apparently to a memorandum submitted by Eban to Tsarapkin (then chairman of the Security Council) at their meeting on 29 July. This memorandum dealt with the UN proposal to terminate the cease-fire situation in Palestine. In the conversation that ensued, Eban dwelt on US pressure on Israel to cede part of the Negev (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 4, No. 170, p. 275).
3. The meeting of this congress concluded with resolutions calling for the establishment of a Palestinian state in the area allotted for that purpose in the partition resolution and rejecting the annexation of the West Bank to Jordan.

9. Consequently, the plans of the Conciliation Commission are incompatible with the genuine aims of the Palestinian refugees, who see the only solution of the refugee problem in the honest and unswerving implementation of the UN General Assembly's decision of 29 November 1947. It follows that the UN Conciliation Commission has proved incapable of solving the problems set before it, because its activity derives not from the interests of the Arab and Jewish peoples, but from the aims of monopolistic circles in the US and Britain.

10. The UN Conciliation Commission admits (in its 3rd report, article 15)[4] that it has achieved nothing by way of implementation of the General Assembly's resolution of 11 December 1948. This is a fact which can not be denied. The Conciliation Commission of the UN has proved to be an unsuitable and incompetent body for the solution of the most difficult problems in Palestine. Therefore the Soviet delegation proposes that the commission be dissolved, and that the supervision of the termination of hostilities and the firm establishment of peace in Palestine be transferred to the Security Council.

11. The UN can accept neither any further delay in finding a radical solution to the refugee question, nor the substitution of palliative measures – such as temporary voluntary aid. It must direct its efforts to the achievement of a solution which would enable the Palestinian refugees to apply their labour effectively, and so to have reliable and sufficient means for their existence.

12. The Soviet delegation considers that the conclusion of peace between the Arab countries on the one side, and the State of Israel on the other, together with the earliest possible implementation of the General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947 for the creation of an Arab state on the territory of the Arab part of Palestine, would serve the cause of peace and constitute a radical solution to the refugee problem.[5]

I.N. Bakulin, 28.8.49
G.T. Zaitsev, 30.8.49

---

4. This article reads as follows: 'Israel's refusal to accept the principle of repatriation is cited by the Arab delegations as the reason for their own reserved and reticent attitude on territorial questions. As for the commission itself, it has found nothing in its talks with the Arab and Israeli delegations at Lausanne to justify a change in the point of view which it expressed in its second report; in particular, the observations contained in paragraph 8, 9, 10 and 14 of that report remain, in its opinion, entirely valid' (see *GA OR, Fourth Session*, Ad Hoc Political Committee, Annex, Vol. II, p. 6).
5. The question of assistance to Palestinian refugees was discussed at the Ad Hoc Political Committee of the Fourth Session of the General Assembly from 30 November through 2 December 1949. The Soviet representative did not speak in the general debate, but the Polish representative did take stand. The committee recommended establishing a United Nations relief and works agency for Palestine refugees in the Near East. In the final vote, the USSR, the Belorussian SSR, the Ukrainian SSR, Czechoslovakia and Poland abstained.

261
V.M. Ankudinov to I.N. Bakulin

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.4, D.17, L.7
Moscow, 3 September 1949
Secret

To the Director of the Near and Middle East Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs Comrade I.N. Bakulin,

A memorandum on the licensing and dispatch of parcels from Palestine and the State of Israel is attached.[1]
Enclosure: as mentioned on p. 1.

Chairman of the Board
Intourist All-Union Joint-Stock Company
V. Ankudinov

APPENDIX[2]

Memorandum on the Licensing and Dispatch of Parcels from Palestine and the State of Israel

On 20 July 1942 Intourist reached an agreement with the Palestinian firm Peltours on the dispatch of parcels to the USSR, with customs duties and other taxes to be paid in foreign currency by the sender at the point of dispatch. In addition, Intourist received 10 per cent commission on the value of the goods contained in the parcels.

This agreement, which was concluded for one year, was renewed from 1943 to 1948 by an exchange of telegrams.

On 24 February 1949, with the permission of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Trade, Intourist concluded a new agreement with Peltours, to last for two years, i.e., until 24 February 1951.

At the same time, on 30 April, Intourist concluded an agreement with the firm Shub & Maryanovsky in Tel Aviv, on terms similar to those of the agreement with Peltours.

The foreign currency income from parcel operations from Palestine (and now from the State of Israel) have been as follows (in thousands of rubles):

1942	85.7	1946	1,300.0
1943	138.9	1947	736.0
1944	2,670.9	1948	244.0
1945	4,206.6	1949 (7 months)	158.0

1. Sent in response to the Near and Middle East Department's inquiry on parcel post from Israel to the USSR dated 20 August 1949 (AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.4, d.17, l.6).
2. The appendix is dated 31 August.

Since no postal or parcels convention existed between the USSR and Palestine prior to 1948, parcels were sent through the Iranian and British postal services.

At present most parcels from the State of Israel are sent to the Soviet Union through the Swiss postal service.[3]

Chairman of the Board
Intourist All-Union Joint-Stock Company
V. Ankudinov

262
Excerpt from a Memorandum by I.N. Bakulin, G.T. Zaitsev and V. Gnedykh

COPY: AVP RF, F.018, OP.2, P.3, D.13, LL.181–7
Moscow, 3 September 1949
Secret

THE PALESTINE QUESTION
(Memorandum)

[...][1]

G. *The Position and Aims of the Great Powers on the Palestine Question*

1. The Palestine question reflects the deepening general crisis of the capitalist system and the bankruptcy of the imperialist powers' colonial policy. It is linked to the struggle of monopolistic groups for possession of the oil resources of the Near East and to the aim of Britain and the US to turn the Middle East into a military and strategic bridgehead against the Soviet Union.

The Palestinian coast is, of course, of enormous importance for the transport of Near East oil, the refuelling of naval ships and the organization of air communications. The loss of Palestine is therefore a great blow to British colonial interests in the Near East. The British and American imperialists are therefore hanging on to Palestine and deliberately complicating the Palestine question.

Doc. 261

3. On 13 September 1949, Director of the Middle East Department Bakulin apprised Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs A.I. Lavrent'ev regarding the contents of this memo, noting that in March 1949, the postal authorities of Israel had proposed to the USSR Ministry of Communications the establishment of a parcel exchange between the two countries and that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had endorsed this arrangement and recommended that the Ministry of Communications approach the USSR Council of Ministers on the matter (see AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.4, d.17, l.2).

Doc. 262

1. This excerpt comprises the last six pages of a 39-page document. Copies of this memorandum were sent to the Department of UN Affairs – and later, in April 1950, to the Soviet legation in Cairo.

2. It is well known that Arab aggression in Palestine was provoked by the British, who have exploited the baser nationalist aims of the Arabs and pushed them into a war against the Jews. British policy on the Palestine question pursued the following aims: to secure their position in the Arab countries, to strengthen their damaged prestige, to clear the way for the conclusion of alliances, and to distract the national liberation movement from demanding the revision of agreements which amount to bondage.

With these aims, and fearing acute Arab displeasure, Britain took the side of the Arab countries, intending the Arabs to do Britain's work. At first the British reckoned on occupying the Arab part of Palestine with Transjordanian troops, but when it became clear that the other Arab countries would not allow this, the British recommended a new plan to the Arab League – occupying parts of Palestine with Arab army units.

The British paid particular attention to the Transjordanian troops, who were given the task of seizing a large part of Palestine and securing an outlet to the Mediterranean for Transjordan. This stemmed from the Anglo-Transjordanian agreement of 1948, and from the British aim of keeping a strategic bridge between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf and also of securing reliable communications and the flow of Iraqi oil to Mediterranean ports. However, the British calculations were mistaken, since the Negev region went to the State of Israel, which has no desire to surrender the southern part of the Negev, intending to keep its own outlet to the Red Sea.

3. The position of the US on the Palestine question is very inconsistent since it runs into sharp conflicts of interest, both domestic and foreign: the oil monopolies want to get hold of Arab oil and therefore to avoid friction with the Arab states, while the military expansionists want to get the British out of Palestine and acquire military–strategic bases there. The political parties are trying to secure the support of influential Jewish financial circles in the US. Reacting to these conflicts, the American position undergoes sharp fluctuations, which undermine the political prestige of the US in the Arab countries.

In its efforts to revise the General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947, the US is trying to secure its positions in the Near East and to dictate a solution to the Palestine question which serves its own interests. The British and the Americans are now engaged in behind-the-scenes negotiations in an effort to agree on the demarcation of their spheres of influence in Palestine. The British are trying to spread their control to the Arab part of Palestine and the Negev in order to annex it to Transjordan, while the Americans try to secure their positions in Palestine and to create military–strategic bases there. The British and American imperialists are covering up the dealings with unbridled anti-Soviet propaganda, which is intended to disguise their real intentions: to frighten reactionary elements in the Arab countries with the 'Soviet threat' and to persuade Arab governments to form some kind of anti-Soviet bloc.

4. Regarding the Palestine question, the Soviet Union is the only Great Power to take a stand of principle, which responds to the genuine aspirations

of the Arab and Jewish peoples. The Soviet representatives to the UN have consistently defended the General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947, and it is only thanks to this firmness and decisiveness that the British and American imperialists have not succeeded in foisting their own solution of the problem on the UN.

Now that the State of Israel has become a reality and the American and British imperialists' policy on the Palestine question has been resolutely unmasked by the Soviet delegates, the Arab peoples have increasingly begun to free themselves from the intoxication of nationalism and to understand that only the USSR is pursuing a policy which will lead to a just solution to the Palestine question.

Since the US and Britain are continuing their efforts to revise the General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947 and to secure their imperialist interests in Palestine, the Soviet position must be to defend that resolution, especially as regards the creation of an independent Arab state in the Arab part of Palestine. As things stand, this position can gain support from some Arab states (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon), which will avert the possibility of annexing the Arab part of Palestine to Transjordan and will also make it easier to accept an international statute for Jerusalem.

Conclusions

1. For the past two years the Palestine problem has never been removed from the UN agenda. This is because Palestine is the point at which British and American imperialist interests meet, and they try to secure their interests there, but the General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947 has upset imperialist plans and made it much harder to put them into effect. This explains British and American efforts to revise the General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947 and to dictate their own solution to the problem.

2. The interest of British and American imperialism in the Palestine problem, and all the related miscellaneous intrigues, secret dealings and pressure on the Arabs and Jews have created a complex political situation and have delayed a solution to the problem. Pursuing their own interests, British and American imperialists are hampering a peaceful settlement of the Palestine question and trying to use the tense situation in the country as a means of crushing the Arabs and the Jews, in order to secure their own advantageous positions.

3. Arab aggression in Palestine provoked by British imperialism has laid bare the military weakness of the Arab states, exacerbated dissension in the Arab camp, and undermined British political prestige even further. Besides, Arab aggression in Palestine has raised a number of new and very serious problems: the questions of the borders of Israel and of the Arab part of Palestine, of the Arab refugees and their welfare, and of peace between the State of Israel and the Arab countries.

4. In spite of all the efforts of British and American imperialists, they have not succeeded in preventing the formation and strengthening of the State of

Israel, which has become a reality, has been recognized by fifty-seven states, and was admitted at the Third Session of the General Assembly as a member of the UN. At present, the British and Americans are coming to an agreement about mutual concessions at the expense of the Arab part of Palestine. In this connection the US is not raising the issue of forming an independent Arab state in the Arab part of Palestine, while Britain is doing everything possible to ensure that this part of Palestine be annexed to Transjordan, and is trying to persuade Israel to hand over to the Arabs of Transjordan the southern part of the Negev, in exchange for which they would receive the whole of Galilee.

5. The UN's most important task in resolving the Palestine problem should be: the creation of an independent Arab state in the Arab part of Palestine, which will make it possible to bring back a large proportion of the refugees to their homes and to peaceful creative labour; the conclusion of peace between the Arab countries, on the one hand, and the State of Israel, on the other; the solution of all controversial issues by direct peaceful negotiations between Arabs and Jews; the adoption of an international statute for Jerusalem; and the protection of the holy places. Such a solution of the Palestine question would serve the cause of peace and respond to the genuine aspirations of the Arab and Jewish peoples.

Bakulin, Zaitsev, Gnedykh

263
M. Sharett to M. Eliash (London)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2408/9
Tel Aviv, 11 September 1949
Top Secret

I read your memorandum to me dated 2nd of this month.[1] The problem, which you so adeptly described in all of its stages, is one of the most intractable of our foreign policy, and I have no doubt that we will continue to wrestle with this grave issue.

It is clear to me that for the time being we will not be able to deviate from the principal line that we have set for our official, declared policy.

To begin with, we must not explicitly identify with the West because of *aliya*. Such a deviation would destroy what prospects still remain for a renewal of *aliya* from Romania and Hungary and bring about the nullification of the

1. Eliash, Israel's minister to London, voiced doubts in the memorandum about the advantages of maintaining a posture of non-alignment in a deeply divided world. He argued that in the event of a global conflagration the non-aligned countries would either be forced to take sides or be overwhelmed by one of the parties (ISA 130.02/2408/9).

concessions promised in Poland and Czechoslovakia. If there is still hope for any *aliya* from the Soviet Union, that will put an end to such hope.

Second, deviation from the principle of non-alignment with the West would be construed by the Jews in Eastern Europe as their complete abandonment, while the Jews of the Soviet Union are liable to view it as a step that would inevitably cause the severance of the spiritual bond between them and the State of Israel.

Third, it would be an act of gross ingratitude on our part towards the Soviet Union and its allies in view of the immeasurably important assistance – political and practical – which we obtained from them in the decisive stages. Without their stand, it is doubtful whether we would have received the support of the United States for the establishment of a Jewish state, the resolution of 29 November [1947], speedy US recognition of Israel, and Israel's admission to the UN. Our path at the UN is still strewn with obstacles and we still need support from everyone who is willing to support us. Practically speaking, British policy towards us at every stage of the UN deliberations and the State Department's stand today on the critical issues of borders and refugees, are not elements that will wean us away from seeking Soviet assistance in the international arena. From the moral point of view, Israel should not show such an example of bad in return for good in international relations or educate its citizens in this manner.

Fourth, a change of this kind in our declared policy would generate a serious domestic shock. The ongoing quarrel today between the existing coalition and the leftist opposition would be nothing compared to the hell that would prevail in the domestic life of the state and of the labour movement if the [policy] shift is made. At this time of bitter struggle, with the tremendous difficulties of absorbing mass immigration, reducing the cost of living, establishing a professional army, etc., we must absolutely avoid shocks that will stoke up mutual hatred between the rival camps and sow confusion among the public. A domestic crisis of this nature would also leave a lethal imprint on our foreign relations, by intensifying the already existing impulse towards separate ties, and it is very doubtful whether even from a purely purposeful point of view the benefits of the shift would not be outweighed by its disadvantages.

It seems to me that the first three considerations can be cited, when properly formulated, in conversations with trustworthy personages. As for the fourth, it is wiser not to use it externally, since it contains an admission of the danger lurking from within; at most, it can be hinted at, with the explanation that hasty foreign policy decisions can accelerate and exacerbate internal crises, which can be more easily and effectively overcome by means of a moderate, cautious approach.

On the other hand, it should be emphasized in such conversations that Israel's foreign policy and its approach to basic issues of the economy, society, and culture are two distinct matters. Under no circumstances does the State of

Israel take a passive, neutral position on the great debate that is being conducted throughout the world. Israel is not sitting on the fence in its perception of the essence of democracy. In both its contemporary regime and its vision of the future, it belongs unswervingly to the world of Western democracy and is following the path of the finest domestic democratic tradition of such countries as Britain, the United States and the Scandinavian countries. Ideologically, Israel is an anti-communist entity.

At the same time, it must be constantly explained that a foreign policy of non-alignment is the only one that, in this formative period of consolidation, can ensure Israel a minimum of entanglements and a maximum of efficiency in solving its pressing problems. Because of its vital interests, it refrains from joining in the Cold War. As a member of the United Nations it refuses to despair a priori of the possibility that actual war can be averted, and as such, it views positively efforts to create points of contact and areas of cooperation between the democratic world and the communist bloc.

Above all, Israel can not be condemned for regarding a third world war as a horrific nightmare from every possible point of view: Israeli, Jewish and global. We have the right to hope and pray that the world will be spared such a devastating holocaust. In conversations with reliable personages, we must openly admit the positive character of the Atlantic Alliance, the rehabilitation of Western Europe, [and] a show of armed force by the Western powers as a means that may deter Russia and induce it to compromise. The communist tide has already been stemmed in Italy and France, and additional successes of true democracy and democratic socialism in raising the living standards of the masses will curtail the spread of the Cominform's influence. It is difficult for us to assume that even in a situation of political retreat by the Soviet Union the West will declare unrelenting war against it. Does not enlightened public opinion in the Western democracies oppose a Western–initiated pre-emptive war? We share that view.

As for drawing a comparison between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany in terms of the aggressor's ploy of swallowing its victims piecemeal, it seems to me that even though all totalitarian regimes have certain elements in common, at bottom they are not, after all, the same. It is wrong to adduce evidence against Stalin from the world's experience with Hitler. From the day it united and became one empire Germany always endeavoured to thrust westward, strove to gain control of the sea, captured or tried to re-acquire colonies. Hitler was bent on achieving world dominion and aspired maliciously to do this by force of arms. This is not the case with the Soviet Union and its satellites. Their principal weapon is propaganda and organization. They do not scoff at force of arms, but they do not delude themselves into the futile notion that they can crush the world in a bloody war. True, they represent a huge land bloc, but that bloc can remain closed within its boundaries and satisfy its needs. Bolshevik Russia has proven more than once that when danger looms to its state and national status due to the aggravation of the

conflict between communism and capitalism, or between communism and democratic socialism, it can restrain its ideological spokesmen around the world for the good of the 'socialist homeland'. If some stability of relations emerges through blocking the spread of communism or the take-over of additional countries by 'People's Democratic' regimes, it will become possible to defer or even completely avert the danger of war.

On the other hand, if war becomes inevitable, and especially if democracy is physically attacked by totalitarianism, a situation will arise which will compel Israel to 'define itself'. In that case there is no doubt as to what the definition will be. Israel will not remain neutral when faced with a fateful choice between freedom of the human spirit and its subjugation. But Israel should not have to take a stand hastily, just out of fear of that future situation, precisely at a time when forcing self-definition could adversely affect its consolidation and growth. Israel's basic attitude towards the questions that are the linchpin of the democratic world should serve as a sufficient guarantee for the Western powers and dissuade them from confronting Israel with the choice of either forgoing their aid or identifying with them publicly and immediately.

There remains the question of preparing and coordinating. Within a certain framework this problem is amenable to solution, even without an explicit shift in foreign policy or other concrete manifestations of identification with the Western bloc and affiliation with a global front. However, while we are chastised for not assisting in joint preparations to meet the danger of an aggressive war by the Soviet Union – a danger we consider to be imagined – and are consequently condemned for being a weak link in the democratic front in the Middle East, we can contend that nothing is being done to fortify the Middle East against the concrete danger of a communist invasion, which will not result from external conquest but from propaganda and organization from within. Such fortification will come about only through extensive development, which will be implemented not in order to bolster the existing regimes but to satisfy the needs of the masses and raise their living standard. This requires not only direct aid to the Arab states; it also means giving Israel the full possibility of assuming a constructive role as a model and an instrument in that enterprise.

The attempt to hobble and weaken Israel not only runs counter to the success of a project of development throughout the Middle East as a wedge against sovietization, it also fosters and encourages within Israel itself developmental trends which are totally at odds with the declared goal of the Western powers.

From this point of view, a comparison of Israel's political position with that of the Arab states – which seeks to credit them and discredit us – is an insult to our intelligence and our self-respect. When all is said and done, the Arab states will always lean towards those who wield power. Their opposition to communism stems only from the natural fear of a particular ruling class, which will be condemned to social and physical perdition by a Soviet victory in the

Middle East. Only in Israel does this opposition have deep roots in the heart of the people, because with us it is grounded in the free will of great numbers of people who hold in esteem the values of human freedom and are ready to give up their lives for them.

264
Meeting: A.A. Gromyko – Sh. Eliashiv (Moscow, 19 September 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.022, OP.2A, P.12, D.4, L.103
Secret

NOTES OF A CONVERSATION WITH ELIASHIV, THE DIRECTOR OF THE EAST EUROPEAN DIVISION OF THE ISRAELI MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, 19 SEPTEMBER 1949

At 15.00 today I received Eliashiv at his request. Namir, the Israeli minister in Moscow, accompanied him.

After the usual exchange of salutations, Eliashiv gave me greetings from Sharett, the Israeli minister of foreign affairs.

I thanked him and asked him to convey my greetings to Sharett.

Eliashiv told me that he had visited a number of East European states on a tour of inspection of the Israeli missions in those countries. He then went on to say that among the difficult questions which would be discussed at the General Assembly was the question of a statute for Jerusalem. The publication of the Conciliation Commission's proposals a few days ago met with an extremely negative reaction in Israel.[1] The basic points of the proposals are these: the demilitarization and neutralization of the Jerusalem zone, the division of the city into two parts, the formation of institutions of self-government for each zone, the appointment of a commissioner with broad powers, a ban on immigration, the creation of an international tribunal to review conflicts between the zonal authorities and also all differences over the holy places.

These proposals are unacceptable to Israel not only because they fail to address the question of sovereignty and forbid Jewish immigration, but also because they do not ensure the safety of the Jewish part of the city, which is surrounded on three sides by Arab territory. The city of Jerusalem can not be detached from Israel, of which it is a constituent part. Detachment would threaten Jerusalem with degradation.

When I asked what Israel's proposals were, Eliashiv answered that Israel considered that one part of Jerusalem (the 'New City') must be handed over to

1. Reference is to the document released by the Conciliation Commission on 13 September 1949, entitled 'The Draft Instrument Establishing a Permanent International Regime for the Jerusalem Area' (see *GA OR, Fourth Session, Ad Hoc Political Committee*, Annex I, Vol. I, pp. 10–14).

Israel; the holy places in the Old City must be put under international supervision; and this supervision must be functional, not geographical. Representatives of the interested parties must be on the supervisory commission. Eliashiv added that the question of the holy places had been exaggerated by the machinations of 'certain forces'.

I commented that the present position of Israel on the issue of Jerusalem was different from what it had been a year ago. Eliashiv answered that this was because changes had taken place during the year.

Eliashiv then asked what the position of the USSR was on the statute for Jerusalem. I said that our position would be stated at the General Assembly. The Soviet position in principle was known; as for details, it would be easier to speak about these at the Assembly, especially because the Soviet and Israeli delegations had always kept in contact on the Palestine question.

At the end of the conversation Namir asked whether the question of trade relations with Israel had been decided.[2]

I answered that the matter was still being studied. Namir asked me to hasten the solution of this question and said that in connection with immigration, economic questions were of vital importance to Israel, which was very interested, both from the political and from the economic point of view, in maintaining economic relations with the USSR, which it regarded as an important factor in the development of the state, the more so because Israel occupied a neutral position and was interested in maintaining friendship with all states.[3]

The conversation lasted 15 minutes, The Near and Middle East Department's attaché V. Gnedykh was present.[4]

---

2. See Doc. 238.
3. For the Soviet reply, see Doc. 268.
4. Copies to Molotov, Vyshinskii, Lavrent'ev, Zorin, Gusev, Near and Middle East Department, Department of UN Affairs and the legation in Tel Aviv.

265
Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – Sh. Eliashiv (Moscow, 20 September 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.5, L.48
Secret

I received Eliashiv today at 15.00 at his request. He was accompanied by Namir, the Israeli minister in Moscow.

The conversation was essentially formal.

At the end Eliashiv touched on the question of Russian property in Palestine, and particularly, the property of the Russian Palestine Society,[1] saying that the Israeli authorities were ready to hand this over to a representative of the society as soon as he arrived in Israel.[2]

I told him that a representative of the society would be leaving for Israel soon.

The conversation lasted 20 minutes.

The Near and Middle East attaché, Comrade Gnedykh, was present.

Director of the Near and Middle East Department
I. Bakulin

266
I.N. Bakulin to A.A. Gromyko (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F 089, OP.2, P.3, D.8, LL.2–11
Moscow, 29 September 1949
Secret

To Comrade A.A. Gromyko,

I attach Comrade Ershov's note 'The Situation in Israel' and with it a draft of instructions to the USSR minister in Israel, which he has prepared with our participation.

When Comrade Ershov left at short notice with the whole legation staff in August 1948, the situation in the embryonic State of Israel was still unclear, and so no directives to Comrade Ershov were drawn up.

---

1. See Doc. 43, n. 4.
2. Eliashiv's transcript of the conversation reads as follows: '[Bakulin] revealed expertise on the Russian property issue; it seems that they have studied the problem. Said that they could supply us with [material] required for settling the issue of property of the society and that its representative would arrive soon in Israel. They have found evidence that the [Imperial Orthodox Palestine] Society was not a private organization but was directed by the tsar' (ISA 130.09/2325/4b).

Now, since he is shortly returning to Tel Aviv, I think it right to give him instructions on the basic aspects of our legation's work in Israel.
Enclosure: As noted, nine pages.

I. Bakulin

* * *

Secret

THE SITUATION IN ISRAEL

1. The State of Israel is a young state, which has not yet grown to full strength. The population (about 1 million) has retained the cultural influence and different dialects of the Yiddish language from the countries where they lived.[1] In its social composition the major part of the population consists of the petty bourgeoisie and members of the independent professions. The working class amounts to no more than 35,000 persons.[2] The country has fourteen political parties, including, until recently, two communist parties. In the elections to the Constituent Assembly on 25 January this year, there were 425,000 voters and twenty-one parties.

However, for all the varied composition and political fragmentation of the population, almost everyone is Zionist, believes fanatically in Zionism and considers it to be the only correct ideology. Only the Communist Party of Israel and one religious party do not profess Zionism.

2. Israel's current economic plight is serious, and there are at present no signs of an immediate improvement. With the beginning of the war in Palestine and the departure of the Arab population from the Jewish part of the country, the area of arable land and the quantity of livestock have been sharply reduced. The country does not produce its own foodstuffs and depends entirely on imports. The shortage of food products is felt, while prices rise and speculation increases. The new immigrants do not go into agriculture, but try to find places in trade and industry, which can not absorb them; so unemployment is growing.

3. The internal political situation is at present marked by an exacerbation of the struggle between reactionary and progressive forces in Israel. The social composition of the population and the weakness of the working class have allowed reactionary forces such as the reformist, right-wing socialist party Mapai, bourgeois–clerical parties and the fascist-type party Herut, which sprang from the terrorist group Irgun Zvai Leumi, to win the elections to the

1. Apparently the author had in mind the fact that Jews in Israel preserved Jewish languages they had spoken in the Diaspora, such as Yiddish and Ladino.
2. The Soviet scholar Lidiia Vatolina of the Economic Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences gave a different estimate – 50,000 (see *Voprosy ekonomiki* 10 (1949), p. 87).

Constituent Assembly and to gain a majority, guaranteeing support for the government and the passage of its legislative proposals. Reactionary forces try to make Israel like the bourgeois states of Western 'democracy', and struggle for the unlimited encouragement of private initiative and the attraction of foreign capital into the country. In foreign policy they follow the line of the US and Britain and have a hostile, if at present restrained, attitude to the USSR.

Israel's progressive forces are grouped around the United Workers' Party (Mapam) and the Communist Party. Mapam is the second-largest party after Mapai. It professes Zionism, but represents a left-wing trend in the Zionist movement. It considers itself a Marxist party and tries to combine Zionism with Marxism and to 'develop' the Leninist–Stalinist line on the Jewish question in the 'new historical conditions' of the existence of an independent Jewish state. In its practical work Mapam struggles for the real independence of Israel, criticizing the government's pro-American policy and arguing for the establishment of friendly relations with the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies. There is a group of people in the party, headed by the former commander of Hagana, Dr. Moshe Sneh, and Central Committee Secretary Yaacov Riftin, who in time may possibly make the party more progressive.

The Communist Party of Israel is insignificant in numbers and in influence in the country. It makes mistakes both in tactics and in matters of organization. It badly needs help.

Mapam and the Communist Party have recently begun to make joint statements on certain questions.

4. The government of Israel, which was formed on 8 March by Ben-Gurion, is a bloc of the reformist Mapai Party and the bourgeois–clerical parties, but without Mapam and the Communist Party. While the fighting was still going on, the internal policy of the government was to create, strengthen and supply the army. Now they mean to strengthen the country's financial base, improve the economic situation, and settle and provide for the immigrants. The government is plainly unable to cope with these tasks. The vast majority of immigrants are still in camps. They can not find work and suffer great hardship, which is evident in the stormy demonstrations of the unemployed in Tel Aviv and Haifa. The government's program includes doubling the population of Israel in four years by means of new immigrants, drawing them into industry and agriculture, and carrying out major works of irrigation and afforestation in the Negev and other uninhabited areas. Among the measures to be taken are the encouragement of private initiative, the attraction of foreign capital into the country, the regulation of imports and strict control of foreign currency expenditure. The government makes statements about granting freedom but at the same time limits it.

5. The aim of Israel's foreign policy since the formation of the state has been to secure the diplomatic recognition of Israel, to prevent the diminution of its territory according to the Bernadotte Plan, to keep hold of the territories won by military activity and to achieve the admission of Israel into the UN. It has made use of the steady support of the Soviet Union and the People's

Democracies and the differences both between the US and Britain and among the Arab countries. As a result, the State of Israel has been recognized by fifty-six countries, has signed cease-fire agreements with the Arab countries and is a member of the UN.

As the Israeli state grew stronger, its foreign policy, disguised as 'neutrality', slid further and further towards the American position. The US influences Israeli policy by controlling the transfer of funds from the Jewish communities in America, which are an important part of the revenue side of the Israeli budget, through its own investment of capital (about $150 million) in Israeli firms, in particular in the Palestine Economic Corporation,[3] and finally by granting Israel $100 million in credit, the conditions of which put the State of Israel under the control of the US. In addition, the US exercises direct political pressure on Israeli policy. It is true that the government of Israel, for domestic political considerations and fearing to lose the support of the USSR, does show some resistance to American pressure, but it is an indecisive and inconsistent resistance. If strong pressure were exerted, supported by the threat of stopping the transfer of funds from the Jewish communities and by a ban on imports, Ben-Gurion's government might capitulate completely to the Americans, becoming a tool for the realization of their expansionist plans in the Near East and even giving them the opportunity to set up military bases on Israeli territory.

The ruling circles in Israel are also trying to establish friendly relations with Britain, although for understandable reasons this has not been given top priority. At the same time, they adopt a friendly attitude to the British puppet, King Abdallah of Transjordan, and generally raise no objection to transferring to him the Arab part of Palestine, on which an independent Arab state ought to be created.

6. The government of Israel understands the great help given by the Soviet Union to the Jewish people in its struggle for self-determination and the establishment of a strong state. It also has to reckon with the popularity of the USSR in Israel and has an interest in continued support of the USSR and in furthering economic relations with it. At the same time, pursuing its own class interests and fearing that the opposition parties (Mapam and the Communist Party) might increase their influence, the government is taking steps to reduce the popularity of the USSR and Soviet influence in Israel. It encourages anti-Soviet propaganda, limits the import of Soviet literature and films and raises obstacles to events organized by the League for Friendly Relations. It also holds back the transfer to us of the very substantial property of the Palestine Society and also state property. Beyond that, the government believes that it will inevitably 'clash' (Sharett's expression) with the USSR over the immigration of Jews from the People's Democracies and the Soviet Union.

---

3. A private investment corporation in Palestine, founded in 1926 by leading American–Jewish businessmen. It participated in the establishment of banks and housing projects, and in the promotion of small industrial and agricultural enterprises.

In this way, the policy of the present government of Israel towards the USSR can be seen to comprise a hostile tendency, which does not, however, show itself clearly or openly yet.

In view of all this, I think that in its practical work the USSR legation to the State of Israel should be guided by the enclosed draft instructions.[4]

P. Ershov

4.
Secret

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE MINISTER OF THE USSR IN THE STATE OF ISRAEL

1. Since the government of Israel relies on the US in its foreign policy, the Soviet legation must show a reserved attitude to the government and its representatives and must keep a close watch on its foreign and domestic policy and promptly inform the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. While showing due respect to the sovereignty of the state, the legation must at the same time explain and emphasize that the decisive factor in the creation and establishment of the State of Israel was the Soviet Union's attitude to the Palestinian question at the UN and subsequently to Israel.
3. Since reactionary Zionism tries to smooth over class contradictions among the Jewish population and is a direct agent of Anglo-American imperialism, the legation must refrain from taking part in purely Zionist functions arranged by the government and political parties.
4. On the question of immigration to Israel of Jews from the USSR, we should bear in mind that this involves the renunciation of Soviet citizenship and is decided in each individual case by the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet in light of citizens' personal applications. As for the departure of Jews from the People's Democracies, that is their business and the legation cannot discuss it.
5. In relations with the opposition parties – the United Workers' Party (Mapam) and the Communist Party of Israel – the legation must confine itself to acquiring information and, without interfering in these parties' internal affairs or the relations between them, support their actions in their struggle to establish friendly relations between Israel and the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies.
6. The legation must work through the leaders of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR who are loyal to us, and who are under the guidance of Mapam and the Communist Party, in order to guide the league towards activities which will popularize the Soviet Union among the people of Israel. As for the public Israel–USSR Friendship Society, which was formed by the ruling Mapai Party to counterbalance the League for Friendly Relations, the legation must define its attitude to this committee according to the latter's activity, keeping in mind that Mapai organized the committee in order to make contact with the Jews in the USSR rather than to promote friendship with the Soviet Union.
7. The legation must expand the activity in Israel of VOKS, Mezhdunarodnaia Kniga, Soveksportfilm and Sovinformburo, by organizing exhibitions, opening a Soviet bookshop, publishing a popular periodical on behalf of the League for Friendly Relations and increasing the screenings of Soviet films.
8. The legation must strive to acquire the property of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission, the Russian Palestine Society, and also state property which is at present in the hands of the government of Israel, and must take possession of it.
9. The legation must help the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in strengthening and spreading the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church in Palestine and in its struggle, conducted jointly with the Jerusalem Patriarchate, against the increased activity of the Vatican.
10. The legation must follow closely the policies and practical measures of the US and Britain, especially those of a military nature, and must keep the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed.

267
M.P. Fedorin to Ia. Kosiakina (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.4, D.29, L.198.
Tel Aviv, 29 September 1949

To the Acting Director of the Near and Middle East Department of VOKS, Comrade Kosiakina
Copy to the Near and Middle East Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

1. The teaching of history and geography in Israeli schools is done mainly with British and American textbooks.

A group of progressive teachers has asked us to supply them with Soviet textbooks on the history of the USSR, on the modern history of capitalist states, and on the economic and political geography of the world and of the USSR. They want to compile textbooks in Hebrew for pupils and teachers.

We have only *The History of the USSR,* Vol. I, edited by Grekov, Bakhrushin and Lebedev. Please send the above-mentioned literature with the next post.

2. In 1948 VOKS gave us *Collected Works of Lenin* (4th edn.), Vols. 1–17, and *Collected Works of Stalin* Vols. 1–7.

Please send us the newly published volumes of the works of Lenin and Stalin (if possible in two copies), which we badly need.

Please also send us the collected *Decisions and Decrees of the All-Union Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks).*[1]

Second Secretary of Legation
M. Fedorin

268
I.N. Bakulin to A.A. Gromyko (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.14, LL.16–19
Moscow, 30 September 1949
Secret

To Comrade A.A. Gromyko,

On 14 April 1949 the Israeli minister Mrs. Meyerson, speaking on behalf of her government, raised the question of obtaining credit from the USSR in order to increase trade between Israel and the USSR.[1] All the material on this subject,

---

Doc. 267
1. Handwritten note at the bottom of the document: 'Comrade Shchiborin, follow up implementation, I. Bakulin.'

Doc. 268
1. See Doc. 238.

together with a draft memorandum to the department concerned, were sent for consideration to Comrade Vyshinskii. Comrade Vyshinskii took the view that the matter of credit should be considered together with other requests from the Jews (questions of military assistance). However, these questions were raised by the Jews during the war in Palestine. At present, since the end of the war and the stabilization of the situation in Palestine, the Jews have not renewed them. Reckoning that the Jews did not make these military requests seriously, we think it advisable to delay replying to them, and to raise with the higher authorities[2] only the matter of credit, the more so since Namir, in his conversation with you on 19 September 1949,[3] asked for an early response.

I attach a draft memorandum to the higher authorities.

I shall be grateful for your instructions.

I. Bakulin

[MEMORANDUM]

On 14 April this year, the government of the State of Israel, through the then Minister in Moscow, Mrs. Meyerson, put to us the question of the possibility of obtaining credit from the USSR to promote an increase in trade between Israel and the Soviet Union. Namir, Israel's new minister in Moscow, has asked persistently for our answer to this question in conversations at the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The government of Israel has raised this question for pressing political reasons. By obtaining credit from us, the government of Israel reckons on securing its position in the country and diverting the opposition parties' criticism of the government's policy of political and economic subjugation to the United States.

Economically speaking, granting a loan to Israel would not bring us any practical advantage, since Israel can not repay such a loan with goods that we need.

Taking account of all this, we think it inexpedient to satisfy the government of Israel's request for credit. In our view, our negative answer should be conveyed to the Israeli minister verbally if he raises the matter again, explaining that the Soviet Union's obligations under agreements already concluded with other countries do not at present allow us to fulfil the government of Israel's request.

A draft decision is attached. Please give it your consideration.

M. Men'shikov, A. Gromyko

2. In Russian, *instantsiia*. Reference is to Stalin or the Central Committee.
3. See Doc. 264.

Draft

DECISION ON EXTENDING CREDIT TO THE STATE OF ISRAEL

Accept the proposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Trade of the USSR to reject the request of the Israeli government for credit to expand trade with the USSR.

Confirm the draft of an oral statement to the minister of Israel in the USSR.

269
M. Sharett to M. Namir (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/3
Tel Aviv, 4 October 1949

Re Eliashiv's cable [PI]251. Request a meeting with Bakulin[1] and inform him that in reaction to your report on the question they asked, you have been directed to explain as follows:

(a) The assumption that our army will be organized along American lines was met with incredulity by our general staff because this is inconceivable, even if only for purely practical reasons, in view of the vast differences in size and defence tasks.

(b) In building our army we are not using ready-made prototypes borrowed from other nations but are following our own path, which suits our unique needs and limited capability. The combination of pioneering agricultural work and military training, and the training of major shock units side by side with the creation of zones of defensive settlements along the borders, attests to the originality of our approach to solving the problem.

(c) It is patently obvious that a young state and a newly formed army like ours are definitely interested in drawing on the experience and wealth of knowledge of veteran and advanced states in organizing an army, as in administration, legislation, services, scientific research, and all the other branches of state activity. For this reason we turned to the USSR requesting that we be permitted to send qualified officers to study certain subjects in the Red Army.[2]

(d) Until now such aid has been exclusively based on individual volunteer activity of Jews from various countries who have come to Israel and offered

1. Eliashiv informed Sharett that the Polish deputy foreign minister and the Czechoslovak representative in Moscow had asked him whether there was any truth to the report that Israel was about to invite American experts to train its army and organize it according to the American model (telegram PI251, 23 Sept. 1949, ISA 130.09/2325/4). Owing to a decoding error, 'The Pole' was transcribed as 'Bakulin', who was director of the Near East Department at the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The error was discovered only after Sharett discussed the incorrect version with the Soviet minister in Tel Aviv (see Sharett to Namir, 26 Oct. 1949, ISA 130.09/2325/3).
2. See Doc. 178.

their services, including economic experts, scientists, physicians, experienced officials, etc. Nearly all have come as new immigrants with the intention of settling, others only to give temporary help.

(e) That assistance has been especially important, in both quantity and quality, to our army. Its ranks include volunteers from fifty-five countries, among them important experts, some of whom are playing a valuable role in organization and technical training, such as pilots and aeronautical engineers from South Africa, and naval personnel and officers with staff experience from Britain and America. There are also tank experts from Czechoslovakia and personnel with staff experience from Poland. All of these are Jews and whether they came as new immigrants or only temporarily, their only motive was dedication to the cause of Israel.

(f) For your considered judgement: If their question stems from the report in *Kol haam* about the American general who is supposedly running our GHQ, here are the facts, and you may convey what you deem necessary. There is no such general. There was Colonel Marcus, a highly esteemed American officer who came as a Jew and of his own accord. His death prompted a friend of his to come and offer his services. He has important experience in war, but is a reserve officer with the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and at the time he volunteered was a journalist. Neither he nor we conducted any negotiations with the US authorities on his appointment. As a citizen of the United States he is free to come and go and offer his services. His position is that of advisor in one of the departments. After the publication of this fabrication in *Kol haam*[3] we were asked officially by the United States embassy if there was any truth to the story, and we gave them the facts.[4]

Sharett

270
Meeting: I.N. Bakulin – M. Namir (Moscow, 5 October 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.5, LL.49–51.
Secret

MEETING WITH MINISTER OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL NAMIR

At 11.00 today I received Namir at his request.[1] After the usual exchange of greetings, Namir said that he had been instructed by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the prime minister, to ask the Soviet government

---

Doc. 269
3. See *Kol haam*, 16, 18, Aug.1949.
4. Cf. also Doc. 270.

Doc. 270
1. For the circumstances of this meeting see Doc. 269 and n. 1 there.

to send some distinguished Soviet specialist in forestry to Israel, to work as adviser to the prime minister.[2] The prime minister of Israel has full powers in economic planning in the State of Israel. He has put forward a plan for the prompt large-scale planting and afforestation of the Negev region. The government of Israel knows that the USSR carries out major projects in this field and that Soviet experts are among the best qualified. That is why Israel is very interested in getting help from Soviet specialists in forestry. Namir added that a Soviet specialist would find it interesting to study the Negev and to gain some experience which would be useful to the USSR too. The Israeli government is ready to give the Soviet specialist the best possible conditions for work, and will let him choose the form which his activity will take (either as adviser to the prime minister, or as attaché for afforestation at the USSR legation in Israel). The government of Israel would be grateful to receive the Soviet government's response to these requests as soon as possible.

I promised to report the prime minister's request to my superiors.

Namir went on to say that last year Israel had asked to support its application for membership in the Universal Postal Union. The Soviet Union, Ukraine and Belorussia supported the application, but Israel did not gain the majority of votes needed for admission to the union. The question was postponed for one year and has now been raised again. On 11 July, during Namir's meeting with Mr. Gromyko, the latter confirmed that the USSR would again support Israel's application.[3] The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs now asks the Soviet Union to adopt a positive attitude to this matter again and would be grateful for an early response, since the deadline for replying is 13 November 1949.

I promised Namir that I would look into the matter.

Namir then said that on 13 September 1949, the Israeli legation in the USSR had sent the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs a note requesting that Colonel Barnea be accepted as military attaché to replace Colonel Ratner. But there was still no response to this request, and Barnea had not obtained an entry visa to the USSR. I answered that visas were handled by the Consular Department, and that I would look into the matter.[4]

Namir then said that the Soviet press sometimes carried telegraphic reports quoting the press of other countries, stating that various projects for a Mediterranean pact were under way, and that the US, Britain and other states were trying to include the State of Israel as a participant in the pact. He had been instructed to repeat and confirm Mrs. Meyerson's statement[5] that the present government of Israel would not abandon its firm policy of neutrality and intended to maintain friendly relations with all members of the UN, and

---

2. The Israeli government invited forestry experts from Italy, Argentina and the USSR to assist with its ambitious ten-year program of planting one billion trees. The trees were to be planted in the hills and plains and along the frontiers and highways.
3. See Doc 255.
4. Barnea arrived in the USSR in mid-October 1949.
5. See Doc. 239.

that there could be no question of the present government of Israel joining any pact against any member of the UN. Moreover, he was instructed to say that reports which had appeared in the Soviet and other foreign presses, that the Israeli government had invited an American military mission to reorganize the Israeli army were totally untrue and were pure invention.

I promised to convey this statement by the minister to the leadership in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The conversation lasted 15 minutes.

Comrade Gnedykh, the attaché at the Near and Middle East Department, was present during the conversation.

Director of the Near and Middle East Department
USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs
I. Bakulin

271
M. Namir to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 5 October 1949

Re Jewish affairs: (a) Like last year we were received in the synagogue with reverence and affection. Once again we were seated on the platform and were called up to the Tora and to read the *haftara.* On Yom Kippur the memorial prayer was recited for the souls of our Jewish brethren who fell on the soil of our holy land in the battle for its freedom and independence. The synagogue was absolutely packed and many thousands were in the street, including young men and women, but unlike last year no one dared speak to us. However, thousands of eyes were riveted upon us the whole time and as we passed among them back and forth they greeted us, cautiously. Police guards were in the street and at the entrance to the building. Nothing must be made public about the memorial ceremony and so forth lest harm befall the synagogue president.[1] (b) From a local Jew: In Moscow, and on a far larger scale in the provincial cities in the Ukraine, Jews are being dismissed in huge numbers from their positions in institutions, in commerce and industry, and also in small tailoring and shoemaking concerns. Deprivation of sources of subsistence is creating a deliberately critical situation in order to encourage the mobilization of immigrants to Birobidzhan, though theoretically there is no coercion.[2] Of expulsions by force he had heard only regarding Moldavia on the official

1. According to Soviet law, every religious association or community had an executive organ whose chairman was in effect the lay leader.
2. The authorities had encouraged Jews to go to Birobidzhan especially from the smaller townships in the Ukraine in the period 1946–47. This migration had come to a total halt by 1948.

grounds that the deportees belonged, or had belonged in the past, to anti-social elements according to another Jew in my cable 258.[3] Resentment toward Jews has intensified this year. Low-level government officials are harassing [them] claiming that the Jews are a disloyal element and are suspected of espionage; in places of employment derogatory remarks are heard, such as: 'Go to your country, to Israel'. The courts are perverting justice and maliciously stiffening penalties against Jews. Many were thrown into prison this year and sent to camps for showing sympathy to Israel, displaying a desire for *aliya* or taking part in the street demonstration last year in honour of our legation.[4] Among those imprisoned he named Mordechai Dubin, a leader of Agudat Yisrael in Latvia. Were it not for the risk to life entailed, masses of Jews would stream to our legation as virtually all of them are ready to emigrate to Israel without delay. Great depression and dread of the future have descended on the House of Israel here. It is feared that there will soon be expulsions from Moscow, which serves as a centre for the survivors [of Soviet Jewry]. More to come.[5]

Namir

272
M. Sharett to A. Eban (New York)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2329/14
Tel Aviv, 14 October 1949

Tonight's appointment,[1] don't use my points if likely even remotely becloud understanding on immediate issues, but what he should otherwise hear from us is: *First*, references their publications Israel as reactionary force subservient imperialists causing deep resentment, alienates sympathies. *Second*, Jewish attachment Zion permanent, ubiquitous, ineradicable, immune all political climates. Latter point to be interpretable by implication as relating also USSR.[2]

Sharett

Doc. 271

3. Dated 2 October 1949, ISA 130.09/2325/4.
4. See Docs. 160 and 179.
5. In two subsequent telegrams Namir gave additional details, including the names of several Jews who had been arrested. In a third cable he relayed information given by a Jewish refugee from Romania about arrests, deportations and persecution of the Jews there. Though Namir felt the account was exaggerated, he believed it was based on fact and undertook to obtain confirmation from other sources (telegrams 263, 264 and 265, 5 Oct. 1949, ISA 130.09/2325/4).

Doc. 272

1. Eban was to dine that evening with Vyshinskii. Sharett was replying here to Eban's request for instructions in anticipation of that meeting (Eban to Sharett, 13 Oct. 1949, ISA 93.01/2202/3).
2. Eban reported after the meeting that it was largely a social affair with the participation of nine representatives from both East and West. The main topic was the Soviet desire to promote the candidacy of Czechoslovakia to the UN Security Council. In private, however, Vyshinskii reiterated Soviet support of the UN resolution of 29 November 1947 and evinced an interest in immigration from the Eastern bloc countries to Israel (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 4, No. 348, p. 554).

273
M. Sharett to M. Namir (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/3
Tel Aviv, 15 October 1949

I am still shocked by survey No. 7.[1] Under these tragic conditions even mere knowledge of these matters and apprising us of them is a tremendous national task. At the same time, we must draw conclusions as to action. My assumptions are, first, that the atomic revelation in the Soviet Union[2] will delay the hot war but will aggravate the Cold [War], i.e., an improvement in East–West relations should not be expected soon; and second, we must not adopt a do-nothing attitude for any extended time. Likewise, I am also inclined to draw two conclusions: first, that if I go to the United States – and this has yet to be decided – I will try to meet with Vyshinskii, not in order to repeat what was said in Paris[3] but to move one step further ahead and raise the problem of Soviet Jewry in connection with Israel. It is not my intention to make requests, only to address the problem as though reflecting aloud. It is clear that the problem bothers them and that they are pondering it. Perhaps their policy in this matter is now in the melting pot and our responsibility obligates us to try and exercise influence. One of my arguments will be that the best guarantee of Israel's friendship with the USSR and of our not joining its enemies is to create a living link to Israel through the Jews of the Soviet Union.

Second. We have to begin a campaign in the international Jewish press, especially in the US, as well as in the non-Jewish press, regarding the question of Soviet Jewry, and to leak to the press all reliable information at our disposal and the rumours as well. In fact, all the material of your last survey[4] and the series of telegrams before and after Rosh Hashana[5] can be published, including the list of names.[6] Suitable places for publication are New York and Paris, and from there they will be reprinted by newspapers in other countries and in

1. Survey No 7, 27 pages long, dated September 1949, and entitled 'Concerning the Campaign against "Cosmopolitanism" and "Anti-Patriotism" (November 1948–August 1949), filed under ISA 130.11/2514/15. It complemented sections dealing with the situation of Jews in the USSR in surveys Nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6. Namir saw the campaign as a grave affair which was having a great impact on Soviet Jewry. According to Namir, his conclusions on Soviet nationalities policy and the fate of Jewry in the USSR formulated in the telegram of 18–20 March 1949 (see Doc. 234) were still valid, and he recommended perceiving the struggle for the right of emigration for some Soviet Jews as a challenge for Israeli–Zionist foreign policy. At the same time, in view of inter-bloc tension, he called for self-restraint.
2. On 23 September President Truman announced that the Soviet Union had exploded an atomic device.
3. See Doc. 206.
4. Survey No. 7.
5. The Jewish New Year fell on 24 September 1949.
6. Survey No. 7 lists about 500 Jews in the Soviet arts and sciences who were mentioned during the campaign in the Soviet press; Namir estimated that another 500 or so Jews, whose names were not made public, were directly harmed by the campaign.

Israel. Particularly important, worth a hundred testimonies, is the publication of the poem,[7] which for me is a horrible human and historical document. I propose publishing it anonymously in a prestigious Jewish journal in the US, such as *Commentary* or *Frontier* in the Russian original with a poetic English translation. I am sure that it will be copied and published around the world in different languages – French, Spanish etc. I admit straight out that the poetess[8] may suffer, since even if we do not publish her name, it will undoubtedly be possible to establish her identity; but in my opinion we must not be deterred because the poem must fulfil its mission in the war of the Jewish people for its existence and future. Both the opportunity to converse with Vyshinskii and the organization of the publication add to the reasons for my trip.

Telegraph immediately yours and Levavi's reaction.[9] Shalom and be strong.

274
A. Levavi to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/26
Moscow, 21 October 1949

Re your cable 233.[1]

(a) A comprehensive and feverish global arms race has begun.

(b) Now, more than ever, a living link between us and Soviet Jewry will mean, from the Soviet viewpoint; a blow to the very foundations of their ideological policy; a most dangerous breach in the wall of isolation that is maintained even towards the People's Democracies and all the more so towards a country with a non-communist government; the danger of espionage and a fifth column. I caution you against raising this idea.

(c) For the conversation with Vyshinskii – a deliberately risky proposal in a supreme effort to make a breakthrough. We can not forgo the Jews of Romania and Hungary who are reaching out to us. Freedom to leave will be granted for one year. Within a year about a quarter of a million will immigrate to Israel. After this only Jews who easily and willingly adapt to the new regime will remain there. We will declare publicly that Zionism's role in the People's

Doc. 273

7. Section of Survey No. 7, entitled 'Anti-Semitism and Jewish National Awakening (Underground Poems)' (pp. 15–20), reported on an extraordinary phenomenon in the cultural life of Soviet Jews — an underground 'poetry contest' between two poems which were circulating secretly, one ascribed to the poetess Margarita Aliger and the other, entitled 'A Reply to Margarita Aliger', to an anonymous writer. Both are reproduced on pp. 18–20 of Survey No. 7. Sharett, in his telegram, refers to the former poem. For the history of both underground poems, their reception by Soviet Jews and differing versions of both texts, see Donat, *Neopalimaia Kupina*, pp. 415–17, and Averbukh, 'Jewish Samizdat', in Ro'i and Beker, *Jewish Culture and Identity in the Soviet Union*, pp. 74–85.
8. Margarita Aliger (b. 1915).
9. See Docs. 274, 275.

Doc. 274

1. Doc. 273.

Democracies has ended. We will further declare that we will not join any bloc of states without the agreement of each of the powers.

(d) Suggest making public the situation of the Jews here before we have exhausted the prospects as per paragraph (c) only if there is a way to conceal effectively the Israeli source; perhaps hint of a semi-official American source is possible. For example the weekly *Newsweek,* which is close to the State Department, boasts that it dealt a severe blow to American communists by revealing Soviet antisemitism. Publicity will do nothing to improve the situation of the Jews here, and could impair Israel's relations with the Soviet Union. Its impact will be positive primarily on public opinion in Israel.

(e) Historical note: Within the next decade, if Israel still exists, many Jews from the Soviet Union will immigrate there; either global tensions will dissipate, enabling this, or a war will be waged which will end one way or the other.

Levavi

275
M. Namir to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4B
Moscow, 21 October 1949

Your 233.[1] Please forgive delay in my reply. I caught a cold and was in bed for a few days.

(a) The assumption that you may be absent from the [General] Assembly is extremely puzzling to us even without any connection to the problem of Russian Jewry. This Assembly is bringing together many foreign policy makers and making it possible to engage in talks with them without the pressure of rumours and sensations that in the existing circumstances attend visits of diplomats to a certain country in particular. It is especially important that you meet with Vyshinskii; opportunities to speak with him are quite rare for representatives of all countries and this opportunity should not be missed. I am not even mentioning Israeli issues on the agenda, of which you are better informed than I am. In my view you should lay aside your doubts and go.

(b) The international situation at this time looks somewhat more gloomy from here after the atomic revelation.[2] One view claims that it did not create a balance of power, but rather, agitated, aggravated and exacerbated an already unstable situation. If the atomic bomb is to be used at all one day in a war between the blocs, then from this time on the major question is no longer knowledge of the secret but the quantity of bombs that are ready and competition over the rate of their manufacture. Therefore the revelation is liable to push America towards shortening the transitional period between the

1. Doc. 273.
2. See Doc. 273 and n. 2 there.

cold struggle and a hot war in order to avoid giving the Soviet side the requisite time to become properly equipped with the new weapon. The kaleidoscopic developments in China and East Germany[3] could give the West added reasons to hasten the armed clash before the Soviet Union has managed to implement in full its military potential, which could upset the global balance of power. From this point of view, precipitation of a hot war can not be ruled out. But whether this is really the situation or whether the Soviet Union merely suspects that this is how the West sees it, the outcome in terms of domestic policy will necessarily lead to greater suspicion and caution *vis-à-vis* ethnic elements that are not immune [to foreign influence] and to sealing the last cracks for contact with the outside; in other words they will look askance at our attempt to expand precisely now our demand for *aliya* from Romania and Hungary to Russia itself, as Erenburg cautioned me in a conversation on 1 December last year, as per my cable 46.[4]

(c) On the other hand, it is almost certain that the Jewish problem here is now being examined and could be decided while we stand aside and deliberately remain silent. Therefore, despite what I wrote in the previous paragraph, but without ignoring it either, I would suggest, first, in line with your proposal, not to demand but to put out feelers, and widen their range to cover various subjects, including *aliya*. I mean that Vyshinskii should be asked why they do not respond to our repeated invitations to establish themselves firmly, economically and culturally, and acquire influence in the process of the state's construction and why they pass up opportunities which ultimately could be to their benefit both now and in the future. They could have influenced the structure of our army and its equipment when we asked for arms and military courses for officers; we proposed the extension of trade relations; we requested a director for Habima [theatre company], soloists and musicians to appear with the orchestra, an emissary to be sent to the Weizmann Institute, and an afforestation expert. We received no reply to any of these [requests]. Nor did we receive a formal reply to the invitation tendered to Gromyko.[5] As for the state's population needs, until now they have contributed only four elderly Jews and a few priests, and they also refrain from assisting in connection with *aliya* from Romania and Hungary. Obviously I am not suggesting that we present a catalogue of complaints; I am only mentioning examples from the legation's experience which require a positive response as a basis for a comprehensive friendship program. It goes without saying that our thrust will be based only on Israel's needs and that we will refrain from intervening in the fate of the Jews within the Soviet Union. Second, regarding the situation of the Jews and emigration from here, we should also act indirectly and in particular try to activate the influence of Henry Wallace, Paul Robeson and the writer Howard Fast, the only Americans who are highly regarded here.

3. That is, the establishment of the People's Republic of China (October 1949) and the German Democratic Republic (May 1949).
4. Doc. 204.
5. See Doc. 251.

(d) I definitely agree that there is a need to publish appropriate parts of my material; however the source must be camouflaged under maximum possible disguise. I can not advise from here what is the best way to do it. Maybe it would be worthwhile postponing somewhat the date of publication so that it will not be linked with the date of Eliashiv's stay here.[6] You have to omit the name of the poetess and turn her into a male. Ask Eliashiv to check attentively the list of Jewish names to prevent errors.[7] Even then one has to say specifically that mistakes may have occurred in ascribing national identity and to stress that from denunciation of their names one must not conclude that all these people were removed from their positions and that Jews are not lauded and awarded honours today as well. On the other hand, do not publish names of newspapers listed in the section 'sources'[8] because the authorities here are aware to which newspapers the legation subscribes. I will refer to Levavi's comments in a separate telegram.[9]

Shalom and all the best,

Namir

276
Sh. Eliashiv to Israeli Legations in Moscow, Prague, Warsaw and Budapest

TEL: ISA 130.09/2513/17
Tel Aviv, 4 November 1949

Presentation of Ben-Gurion's speech[1] as attack against the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies is distortion and libel. Speech stressed that substance of debate is not socialism or communism and that debate is between socialist Zionism and worldwide Evsektsiia. Speech was directed against communist Jews who stifle every free Jewish manifestation and immigration effort

---

Doc. 275

6. Eliashiv visited Moscow from 15 to 24 September 1949.
7. See Doc. 273, n. 6.
8. Reference to section in Namir's Survey No. 7, pp. 21-2 (see Doc. 274, n. 1).
9. See Doc. 274; Namir's telegram not traced.

Doc. 276

1. Reference is to Ben-Gurion's speech at a rally of Mapai activists in Tel Aviv on 29 October, in which he attacked Romanian Foreign Minister Ana Pauker, 'the daughter of a Jewish rabbi', who was suppressing any manifestation of free Jewish and Zionist activity and working against emigration to Israel. He called these acts typical of Evsektsiia Jewish communists – members of the Jewish section set up within the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) in 1918, who were notorious for their radicalist approach towards integration of the Jewish population into Soviet economic, social and political life. To Ben-Gurion, Pauker's stand was in sharp contrast to that of non-Jewish communists who were permitting, at least for the time being, emigration from Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Poland and Yugoslavia. Ben-Gurion's speech elicited sharp protest from the Romanian government. See also *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 4, No. 393, p. 605.

and it singled out favourably non-Jewish communists in governments of the People's Democracies who behave differently. Mentioned sins of the [Jewish] fraction in past. Ben-Gurion noted existence of plutocratic Evsektsiia world-wide and named American Jewish Committee. Full contents by airmail.

Eliashiv

277
Meeting: M.A. Maksimov – M. Namir (Moscow, 10 November 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.5, L.52
Secret

I received Namir at his request at 15.30 today. After the usual exchange of greetings, Namir said that on instructions from the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs he had to inform the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs that British representatives had asked the government of Israel to let them know if it would be possible for Britain to be given a seat on the board of the Port of Haifa. In support of their request, the British had mentioned the traditional British interest in this area and the existence of a British oil refinery in Haifa. The Israeli government had considered this request and concluded that it could not be granted; the British had been informed of this.

In Namir's opinion, this request was the minimum British demand after their failure to implement more ambitious plans for Haifa.[1]

I told the minister that I would bring his statement to the attention of my superiors at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Namir went on to say that, as was known, the UN Conciliation Commission was now in Palestine.[2] When the establishment of this commission was still being discussed, Israel had come out against its proposed membership, asking for wider participation from among other countries, including the USSR and the People's Democracies.[3]

---

1. Reference is to the British Foreign Office proposal of 18 July 1949 to establish a free port at Haifa (or at least a free zone for all Arab states). It presupposed that the crude oil from Iraq could be freely exported from Haifa and in return, Iraq could supply oil for Haifa's refineries (see Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy*, p. 294).
2. In accordance with the General Assembly resolution of 11 December 1948, the Palestine Conciliation Commission set up its headquarters in Jerusalem on 24 January 1949. It was located in Government House (the former residence of the British High Commissioner for Palestine), which stood in the demilitarized zone between the Israeli and Jordanian lines. From April 1949, the activities of the commission were centred in Lausanne, and from October, in New York.
3. See Eban's statement at the First Committee of the General Assembly on 30 November 1948: 'The commission would be most likely to obtain this confidence [of the parties concerned] if it were a small replica of all neutral United Nations' opinion.' In this regard, proper geographical distribution was essential and he urged that the number of members be increased in order to give expression to this principle' (see *GA OR*, Third Session, Part 1, First Committee, p. 827).

After the commission had spent several months in Palestine, it became clear to the government of Israel that the commission's work was having a deleterious effect on relations between Israel and the Arab countries. This point of view was officially expressed by Ben-Gurion, the Israeli prime minister, who stated in parliament on 9 November that the Conciliation Commission was not doing anything useful for the settlement of controversial questions between Israel and the Arabs; on the contrary, it was making the achievement of mutual understanding more difficult, since the very existence of the Conciliation Commission had created a barrier between the interested parties, and made it harder for them to reach agreement directly among themselves.[4]

The minister went on to say that Israel was convinced that the commission's mediation was far from objective. In the Israeli government's view, before the arrival of the commission in the Middle East, the Arab League had been on the brink of total collapse. One of the commission's tasks had been to revive the league, in which it had had some success. On its initiative, frequent summit conferences of representatives of Arab countries were held, in order to coordinate their policy against Israel, and work out joint minimum aggressive demands.

'I should be grateful', the minister concluded, 'if you would convey what I have said to the attention of your superiors in the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.'

I promised to do this.

The minister then said that on instructions from the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs he had the following request to make:

The government of Israel would be very grateful to the Soviet government if the prime minister of Pakistan were to visit Moscow, or at meetings with the Pakistani ambassador in Moscow, the Soviet representatives (if this was convenient for the USSR) could hint to the Pakistanis, even in the most oblique way, and only in such a way as was convenient for the Soviet representatives, that the USSR would react favourably if Pakistan were to recognize the State of Israel, and that this would contribute to the preservation of peace and security in the East. It would be important for Israel if a Muslim state far from Palestine, such as Pakistan, would recognize the State of Israel and thereby drive a wedge in the united bloc of Muslim countries. It is known to the Israeli government that within some ruling circles in Pakistan (including the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs), there is a tendency to favour the recognition of Israel.[5]

---

4. See Ben-Gurion's speech in the Knesset, on 8 November 1949, *Divrei haknesset*, Volume III, p. 14.
5. This approach had been made following indirect overtures by Pakistani representatives to their Israeli counterparts in Australia and at the UN. The rationale behind these overtures was a Pakistani attempt to win Israeli support in the dispute over Kashmir (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 4, Nos. 275, 367, pp. 447–8, 571–2).

I answered that I would bring the minister's request to the attention of my superiors in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Namir told me that he was leaving shortly for Paris, where he had been summoned to meet Sharett, the Israeli minister of foreign affairs, who is on his way to the General Assembly in New York.

The conversation lasted 20 minutes.

The attaché of the Near and Middle East Department, Comrade Gnedykh, was present.

Deputy Director of the Near and Middle East Department
USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs
M. Maksimov

278
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett (Tel Aviv, 15 November 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.3, P.6, D.6, L.3
Secret

I went to see Sharett at his invitation. Sharett said that the plan for a security pact of Arab countries, which was currently being talked about a good deal in neighbouring capitals,[1] had the support of the US and would be discussed at a meeting of American diplomats in Istanbul.[2] The government of Israel had adopted a negative attitude towards this pact. It would lead to the consolidation of revanchist attitudes in the Arab countries and to active preparations for a 'second round' of hostilities against Israel. It could be directed as well against a friendly country – the USSR. The government of Israel, firmly following its policy of neutrality, had therefore decided to adopt a negative approach to this pact, and had so informed McDonald, the American ambassador, who would be taking part in the meeting in Istanbul.

Sharett then remarked that Newman, the former American correspondent in Moscow, who had recently published 'a number of unseemly articles' about the USSR, had now been crossed off the list of foreign correspondents who were invited to receptions at the Israeli legation in Moscow.[3] I answered that

1. Egypt first raised the idea of an inter-Arab collective security pact at the 11th session of the Arab League in Cairo in October 1949. The idea was accepted in principle, and an agreement initialed in April 1950. Its implementation, however, was dragged out for several years, until 1953.
2. Reference is to a meeting of all US representatives in the Near East that took place at the end of November 1949 in Istanbul. At this meeting, attended by US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs, George C. McGhee, US policy in the Middle East was discussed. The Tripartite Declaration on the Middle East, which was made in May 1950 was apparently one of the major items discussed at the meeting.
3. Joseph Newman, the *New York Herald Tribune* correspondent in Moscow, had been dispatching a series of reports critical of life in the Soviet Union.

I could not see that this remark by the minister carried any weight if the Israeli press then reprinted these 'unseemly articles'.[4] Sharett answered that there was freedom of the press in Israel, and that therefore newspapers could print whatever they liked. I asked: 'Does that include insulting articles about the representatives of foreign, and especially friendly, states?'[5] Sharett said that the articles in question had been reported to him, and that he intended to speak to Ben-Gurion, and to tell the editors that such articles were not to be permitted; but it would hardly be possible to ban them outright, since there was no law applicable to this purpose. I answered that I was not raising the matter just now, but that I reserved the right to return to it, and in that case I would like to know whether Israeli freedom of the press had any precise limits, since the minister had said that the newspapers could print whatever they liked.[6]

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

4. The *Palestine Post* of 9 November 1949 carried the story, first published in the *New York Herald Tribune*, of the passionate reception of Golda Meyerson in the Moscow synagogue at the New Year service the previous year, and quoted from Newman as follows:

   > There was an impassioned, almost hysterical outburst of feeling when Mrs. Meyerson attended the Rosh Hashana services at the Moscow Synagogue, Mr. Newman writes, 'Jewish men and women broke out in tears and cried out aloud, "We waited all our lives for this day, tomorrow to Jerusalem."' The Soviet rulers considered this display as disloyalty and started a campaign to terrify the Jews into abandoning their hope, the report said.

5. On 11 November 1949, the literary supplement of *Maariv* published a satire entitled 'False Alarm', signed under the pseudonym Reb Ipkha Mistabra. The article described an imaginary conversation between the Soviet minister in Israel, his adviser and his servant reflecting the history of the repressive policies of the Soviet authorities towards the Jews in the USSR.

   The Soviet minister cabled the contents of this article to Moscow and proposed that the Israeli government close down the paper. Referring to Ershov's telegram, Deputy Director of the Middle East Department M. Maksimov wrote to Gromyko and suggested that Ershov himself draft an oral statement and submit it for approval in Moscow. Maksimov advised not hurrying with the statement, but waiting for Sharett's departure for the UN General Assembly in New York, and then delivering the statement to the acting minister of foreign affairs, Ben-Gurion.

   Following receipt of this document, Maksimov wrote to Gromyko, referring to Ershov's meeting with Sharett on 15 November and saying that, owing to Ershov's protest at this meeting and Sharett's explanation, there was no need for immediate action. Should Sharett's explanation turn out to be unsatisfactory, further action would be taken (see correspondence in AVP RF, f.089, op.2, p.3, d.13, ll.5–6).

6. Although the events referred to in this document occurred on 15 November 1949, it was typed and signed on 2 January 1950 and arrived in Gromyko's office on 12 January 1950. This means that Ershov apparently edited the text of the conversation bearing in mind Moscow's instructions.

279
Meeting: M. Sharett and Sh. Eliashiv – P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv, 15 November 1949)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2513/4

The [foreign] minister apprised the minister of our opposition to the Arab states' plan for a defence pact.[1] He noted that such an alliance, if established, would be directed against the Soviet Union, a country with which we had friendly relations, and that that alone was sufficient reason for us to oppose it. As an alliance directed against the Soviet Union, the Arab states hoped to obtain support from America. However, we might assume that after being established under this cover, it would also be directed against us and this was a second reason for our objection to the alliance. The foreign minister informed the Soviet minister that he had emphasized these two points in his conversation with the American ambassador, prior to the latter's departure for a consultation of American envoys in the East, and had cautioned him against supporting the alliance.

The foreign minister remarked, apropos Newman's articles in the *Herald Tribune*,[2] that when Newman was in Moscow his relations with our legation there had been bad and that he was the only foreign correspondent whom our legation had struck off its list of invitees to its receptions.

The minister: 'Nevertheless, your press prints his articles.'

The foreign minister: 'Ours is a free press which prints what it wishes.'

The minister: 'And is it permitted also to publish articles that are injurious to foreign representatives?' He remarked that he was saying this only in passing, in connection with the previous comments by the [foreign] minister, and was not making any special request in that regard. He was referring to the articles that appeared in *Maariv* and *Yediot aharonot* after the reception marking the 7th of November at the Soviet legation.[3] The minister and I expressed our displeasure at the publication of these articles. The minister emphasized that there were no legal means to prevent such items from being published, but it that would be necessary to examine the question and find a way to do just that.

The [foreign] minister then passed on to the meetings of the League for Friendly Relations which were held in various places in the country in the presence of representatives of the Soviet legation, and at which the government of Israel was roundly attacked. The [foreign] minister said he was certain that the minister had not known the content of the speeches in advance and that he and his aides had been placed in an awkward position as a result. The

1. See Doc. 278 and n. 1 there.
2. Doc. 278, n. 3.
3. The two newspapers published reports criticizing the decision not to invite Israeli officials to the reception at the Soviet legation on 7 November (see *Maariv* and *Yediot aharonot*, 11 Nov. 1949; also Doc. 278, n. 5).

minister replied that he agreed absolutely that the friendship gathering was no place for speeches on domestic affairs.

As we left the [foreign] minister's office, the minister told me that on this occasion he had referred to the newspaper articles only in passing and that he was reserving the possibility of returning to the subject.

280
M. Sharett to W. Eytan (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 93.01/2202/5
New York, 1 December 1949

The interview with Vysh[inskii] has been promised but has not yet been scheduled. In the meantime I spoke cordially but sharply with Tsarap[kin]. I said that had the internationalization they so highly lauded come into being, they would never have received their property in Jerusalem. He tried to downplay the importance of receiving the property and claimed that it had always been in the possession of the Russian Church. I said that this was a peculiar abnegation of the facts. Today the property was in Soviet hands, this was the only foothold they had in the East, and their flag was flying in the heart of Jerusalem. Under no circumstances would they have obtained this from a representative of the UN, who would have deferred to the will of the United States. We had circumvented a law to arrange the matter and strained our relations with the United States. He tried to adhere in principle to the resolution of the 29th [of November 1947] and accused us of repudiating it. I retorted with the known facts. He backtracked and explained that they were not trying to undermine the borders and certainly were not taking a position against the Jews, and that their primary intention was to negate the rule of Abdallah, which was, in effect, rule by the British. I said that internationalization meant rule of the British, the Americans and the Vatican in the entire city. The choice was between extending or diminishing British rule. We were diminshing and they were extending. He argued that internationalization would be subject to the Trusteeship Council. I replied that this was far from certain, as the majority could decide otherwise, and even if it were subject to the Trus[teeship Coun]cil, they had only one vote, so how would this avail? He said that if everything were to be decided by a majority vote there would be no end to it. I replied that bitterness would not help and that the problem lay not in insisting upon abstract principles but in foreseeing developments and adopting realistic tactics. So much for that.

I suggest summoning Ershov, lecturing him along these lines,[1] and deploring their de facto support of the Vatican's greed and the Arabs' fraudulent

1. See Docs. 282 and 286.

ploys. He should be asked to cable [this message to] his capital. I suggest also cabling a directive to Levavi to submit these petitions. In both conversations emphasize the transfer of the property, adopting a line which condemns their ingratitude. Substantively, I am not concerned, and if we uphold our status in Jerusalem without their help, indeed as if in spite of it, as it were, that will be very healthy. At the same time, we must not forgo a vigorous information campaign in order to induce them to change their position in the final vote at the [General] Assembly, which is not impossible. For the time being, the internationalization front in the subcommittee[2] consists in effect of them, the Arabs, who have become advocates of internationalization in the hope of pushing us out, the reactionary countries of Latin America, and Australia, which is an exception for well-known reasons.[3] Opposing them are Holland, Sweden, Canada and the progressive Latin [Americans]. Greece and India are at present abstaining but in private conversations the Indians are with us.[4]

Sharett

281
A. Levavi to Sh. Eliashiv (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 4 December 1949

December 21st is Stalin's seventieth birthday. The event will be marked here and in the [Eastern] bloc countries. The diplomats from outside the bloc do not yet know whether congratulations will be sent by their prime ministers, and this will apparently become clear only at the last minute. It is thought that there will be greetings as this is his seventieth birthday. In my view the prime minister of Israel should congratulate Stalin in the event that there are other [messages of] congratulation from outside the bloc. My proposal is that the formulation be similar to the congratulations that the [diplomatic] corps in Israel sent to [President] Weizmann, even though Stalin is head of government and not head of state. To prevent any hitch it would be advisable to inform us

2. The subcommittee for study of all draft resolutions on internationalization of Jerusalem was established by the Ad Hoc Political Committee on 29 November 1949 and consisted of representatives of 17 countries. It was to submit its report within three days.
3. Reference is to the general elections in Australia which were scheduled for 10 December 1949 and the alleged wooing by the governing Liberal Party of the Catholic vote (about 25 per cent of the Australian population).
4. On the next day, 2 December 1949, the subcommittee adopted a revised version of the Australian proposal (nine to six, two abstained). The Ad Hoc Committee discussed the subcommittee's report from 5 to 7 December 1949.

by code of the text of the prime minister's congratulatory message and to empower the minister to convey it in French if there is a partner for this. Please transmit this cable also to Namir in Paris.[1]

Levavi

282
Meeting: W. Eytan – P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv, 6 December 1949)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2513/14

The Soviet minister was invited for a conversation with the director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Eytan. He was originally invited for 5 December, but the Soviet legation informed us that 5 December was Constitution Day in the Soviet Union, and the minister preferred to come on a different day; if the matter is urgent he is prepared to come on Sunday, 4 December. We set the conversation for Tuesday.

The substance of the conversation was the question of Jerusalem. Dr. Eliashiv also took part in the conversation. On the previous day, the ministers [and ambassadors of the foreign legations] were offered a translation of the prime minister's declaration in the Knesset.[1] Ershov stated, in reply to a question, that he had received the document and read it.

The following remarks were made to the Soviet minister:

The government of Israel is disappointed at the turn taken in the discussions at Lake Success. Though we do not consider ourselves authorized to point out to the Soviet Union how its delegation should act at the UN, we do consider it our obligation to make a few comments. We understand the Soviet delegation's adherence to the 29 November resolutions. At the same time, the intention of the UN [General] Assembly in the clause referring to the status of Jerusalem in its 29 November resolution should be heeded. By internationalizing the city the UN sought to achieve two goals: (a) to ensure freedom of access of all religions to the holy places; (b) security for Jerusalem's

Doc. 281

1. A congratulatory message, on behalf of Prime Minster Ben-Gurion and 'all the people of Israel', was dispatched to Levavi to be transmitted to Stalin (see Eliashiv to Levavi, 16 Dec. 1949, 130.09/2325/3).

Doc. 282

1. On 5 December, Prime Minster Ben-Gurion discussed Israel's position with regard to Jerusalem and received his government's approval for a stand opposing the internationalization proposal. Following this approval, Ben-Gurion addressed the Knesset where he declared that 'Jewish Jerusalem is an organic and inseparable part of the State of Israel and the soul of our people'. He also reaffirmed that Israel was 'ready to make all the necessary arrangements to enable the adherents of other faiths to fulfil their religious needs in Jerusalem'. For Ben-Gurion's declaration, see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 4, *Companion Volume*, Editorial Note, pp. 272–4.

Jewish population. Both of these goals can be achieved on the basis of the motion that was introduced by the Israeli delegation. Regarding the first goal, the government of Israel has declared its absolute willingness to give full freedom to all religions and to the rites of all religions at the holy places, and has also agreed of its own volition to international supervision over the holy places. It should be noted that no other regime that ruled Jerusalem in the past ever suggested international supervision over the holy places, as the government of Israel is now doing. As for the second goal, it should not be forgotten that at the time, the UN [General] Assembly extended the area of international Jerusalem, annexing to it various settlements in the vicinity, such as Moza, solely in order to ensure the safety of the residents of those settlements, which [otherwise] would have remained within the bounds of the Arab state, cut off from Israeli forces. There is no doubt that the fact that these settlements are within the boundaries of the State of Israel and the connection of Jewish Jerusalem to the state of Israel constitute the most serious guarantee for the safety of this population. It is thus possible to say that, although the form may be different, the substance of the Israeli plan nevertheless incorporates the major intention of the 29 November resolution as it relates to Jerusalem.

From here to a second issue, more material in content – the question of Russian property in Jerusalem. The government of Israel has adopted a certain policy with the aim of transferring Russian property to the Soviet government and Soviet religious institutions. In part this has already been implemented and the remaining part will be similarly completed. The government does not intend to change this policy, but feels it is incumbent upon it to point to the contradiction between the Soviet government's demand for the property, which is directed to the government of Israel as the party that controls Jerusalem, and the position adopted by the Soviet delegation to the UN rejecting Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem. We understand the Soviet Union's aim to prevent British influence from becoming dominant in the Old City of Jerusalem under the guise of the Jordanian state. However, it can not be ignored that the proposal to internationalize Jerusalem does not solve the problem, but is liable to extend Anglo-Saxon and Catholic influence to all of Jerusalem. For, at best, when supervision over Jerusalem is transferred to the Trusteeship Council, the Soviet bloc will be but a small minority within the governing body, and the decisive majority will be in the hands of the Western powers. Instead of localizing and reducing Western influence, by supporting the motion to internationalize Jerusalem, the Soviet Union will be augmenting it.

We assume that the Soviet minister knows that the main factor acting against the transfer of Russian property was the Catholics, and that they did not act only indirectly. We did what we could in this matter in spite of this rather strong pressure. It comes as a surprise that in the proposal on Jerusalem's future the Soviet Union found a common language with none other than those Latin American countries in which the Vatican's influence is so pronounced. Internationalization of Jerusalem will not only strengthen the

Vatican's influence, it will also do the same for France, and perhaps also for Italy. Spain's efforts to gain a foothold somehow in Jerusalem are also well known. In any case, if such a regime were established in Jerusalem one [thing] would be clear – the Soviet flag would not fly over the buildings of the Ecclesiastical Mission in the centre of Jerusalem. One cannot ignore another factor, namely the potential Western influence on the Jewish population of Jerusalem if, in fact, such a regime were to be established.

It must be noted, finally, that we all wish for the UN to be strengthened and that no one is interested in the UN adopting unfeasible resolutions. The proposal for the internationalization of Jerusalem is unrealistic.

Eytan pointed out at the beginning of his speech that more or less the same had been said by Israel's minister of foreign affairs to Mr. Tsarapkin,[2] and that he felt bound to convey them also to the Soviet minister in Israel and to request him to transmit their content to his government.

The minister asked whether what he had heard now was identical with what had been said to Mr. Tsarapkin at Lake Success, and whether he was being asked only to transmit its content. The answer was that we were aware of the general line of the talks at Lake Success and that it had been said under the circumstances prevailing there, while what we were saying here was bound up with the reality prevailing in Israel, that this was being said to a person familiar with Jerusalem and with this reality, and that other points may have been stressed here. We therefore requested that the minister transmit to his government what he had heard here. The minister replied with a smile that actually he had been to Jerusalem only once. Eliashiv remarked that he could be briefed on Jerusalem by his assistants, who had often visited the city.

Towards the end of the conversation the minister asked two questions: the first was connected with the present talk, namely, did Mr. Sharett and Tsarapkin also discuss the Russian property? The answer was – yes. The second question was in effect a request for information about press reports on the talks between the government of Israel and Abdallah's government. The answer was: we meet the representatives of Jordan regularly on the various committees which have been sitting routinely for a long time now. At the same time feelers have been put out by the Jordanians concerning a peace treaty. It may be noted here that we think it more important to arrive at a lasting settlement with the other Arab states first. A serious problem in our relations with the Jordanians is our wish to do away with British influence there – a fact of which the Soviet Union is well aware, and here lies the main difficulty.

2. See Doc. 280.

283
P.I. Ershov to A.I. Lavrent'ev (Moscow)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.13, L.17
Tel Aviv, 7 December 1949
Secret

To the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Comrade A.I. Lavrent'ev,

I enclose a memorandum: 'Anti-Soviet Propaganda in the Israeli Press', written by Comrade M.P. Popov, attaché at the legation.[1] The memorandum outlines the basic methods and tendencies of anti-Soviet propaganda in the Israeli press, and presents substantial excerpts for the period May–November this year. It shows that the reactionary Israeli press conducts systematic anti-Soviet propaganda.

As there has been no appropriate reaction on our part, either on the diplomatic front or in our press, anti-Soviet propaganda in the Israel press is intensifying at a fast rate, and goes beyond the limits observed in normal diplomatic relations. The offensive article in the newspaper *Maariv* of 11 November attacking Soviet representatives in Israel[2] should be noted in this connection.

Since it was considered undesirable to make a sharp complaint to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs about this, perhaps you will find it helpful to make use of the enclosed material in our press.

Enclosure: memorandum and translations of a number of articles from Israeli newspapers.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

1. Doc. 284.
2. See Doc. 278 and n. 5 there.

284
Excerpts from a Memorandum by M. Popov

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.13, LL.8–20
Tel Aviv, 7 December 1949

ANTI-SOVIET PROPAGANDA IN THE ISRAELI PRESS
(*Memorandum*)[1]

The Israeli press systematically promotes anti-Soviet propaganda, publishing defamatory articles about the Soviet Union, its foreign and domestic policies and the leaders of the Soviet government.

The exceptions are the newspapers *Kol haam* (the organ of the Communist Party) and *Al hamishmar*, the organ of the United Workers' Party (Mapam), which print positive articles about the Soviet Union, including articles supplied by the Sovinformburo.

The leading role in the anti-Soviet propaganda campaign is played by the newspaper *Hador*, the organ of the main government party Mapai. *Hador* is joined by *Herut* (the organ of the fascist party Herut), *Haboker*, and other bourgeois papers.

Anti-Soviet propaganda in Israel is inspired by the reactionary American press, the American–Jewish bourgeoisie, which has a great deal of influence on life in Israel, and reactionary circles in Israel itself, beginning with Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, who, in fact, directs all anti-Soviet propaganda in the country, although formally he 'does not interfere' in the affairs of the press, referring to 'freedom of the press' in Israel.

The main methods for implementing anti-Soviet propaganda are the following:

1) Reprinting anti-Soviet articles from the foreign, mainly the American, press;

2) Publishing anti-Soviet articles by local authors;

3) Publishing anti-Soviet 'letters' and 'interviews' which are often no more than an author's device, and not letters or interviews at all;

4) Printing libellous anti-Soviet reviews, mainly of Soviet films;

5) Publishing articles commenting on various statements by representatives of the Soviet Union on international issues; in such articles the author usually tries to induce the reader to draw anti-Soviet conclusions.

There are petty but malicious attacks on the Soviet Union under every possible pretext, such as: 'Paul Robeson,[2] the Cominform's Latest Conquest'

---

1. Sections which contain material presented in earlier documents have been deleted.
2. Paul Robeson visited the USSR from 4 to 15 June 1949. In spite of the discovery that his friend, Itsik Fefer, had been arrested, Robeson continued to defend the Soviet Union, insisting publicly on his return to the US that the USSR 'had done everything for their national minorities' (Duberman, *Paul Robeson*, pp. 353–4).

(*Haboker*, 12 June 1949); 'Is Professor Einstein Now Banned, Too?' (*Davar*, 31 July 1949); 'What if Russia Had a System Which Was Not Soviet but – Democratic?' (*Herut*, 21 August 1949), and so forth. But the main themes of anti-Soviet propaganda in the Israeli press are these:

I. The foreign policy of the USSR, its relations with Israel, and the relations between the USSR and Yugoslavia;

II. The domestic affairs of the Soviet Union; the condition of the working people, and particularly the Jews, in the USSR; Soviet culture;

III. Libel against the leaders of the party and the Soviet government.

* * *

[...]

2. In *Davar* of 26 August 1949 Dan Pines, the editor of the paper, wrote in an article entitled 'Israel, America and the USSR': 'Why have both these powerful states changed their attitude to Israel? Of course, they supported us out of their own interest.'

Concerning the Soviet attitude to Israel, the article says:

> Moscow is not usually satisfied with 'good behaviour'. It demands obedience and subordination to its orders and identification with its interests. Possibly, Moscow understands the special position of the young state and is therefore ready to adopt a special attitude to it. Moscow is ready not to make decisive and specific demands and not to force Israel to take on immediate political, economic and military obligations. For the time being, Moscow is ready to accept the formula of 'neutrality between West and East'... Moscow wants to 'haggle', to increase the price, and to calculate and measure every step it takes in relation to Israel.

[...]

4. The reactionary Israeli press, following the American yellow press, not only distorts the Soviet Union's efforts to secure peace, but also attributes imperialist intentions to it.

Hador (18 July 1949) wrote that the USSR's military budget amounted to 19.2 per cent of the national income, whereas in the US it was only 6.2 per cent; 'The Russians are building a gigantic submarine fleet' (*Herut*); 'Communist agents are passing contraband arms into Saudi Arabia, in order to arm the tribes for guerrilla attacks on the Americans who are building the Aramco pipeline' (United Press correspondent in Cairo, printed in *Yediot maariv*, 8 September 1949); United Press reports (in *Herut*, 1 November 1949) that in the Mediterranean, near Tobruk, an unidentified aircraft crashed, which at the critical moment 'identified itself as Soviet'.

On 17 July 1949, *Haboker* printed an article by Jon Kimche, which said: 'For the past four years the Soviets have supported the Kurds against Iran and Iraq.'

On 1 November 1949 *Hador*, in an article entitled 'Pakistan – The Focus of Moscow's Interest', referring to a report of the International Commission for the Investigation of European Problems, wrote: 'Step by step, Russia is following the Chinese communists' advance and is planning to bring Pakistan "into the network of communist seizures of power" and to turn it into a centre of

communist activity for the expansion of Soviet hegemony into south Asia'. The paper goes on:

> The Russians have already built more than 30 airfields in Communist China, and thousands of Soviet agents have been sent into the newly occupied areas. Mao Tse-tung is in constant touch with Marshal Malinovskii', and therefore, they say, 'there is no hope that the story of Tito will be repeated in China, for Russia understands that danger and is on guard... Soviet propaganda never stops repeating to the Chinese people that their duty is to liberate all the other peoples of Central Asia from imperialist hegemony.

5. The entire Israeli press reacted to the TASS report that the Soviet Union had long ago discovered the secret of using atomic energy.[3] The reactionary papers used this report to launch a new attack in the anti-Soviet campaign.

Hador (26 September 1949) wrote sarcastically: 'Mankind has at its disposal not only the imperialist American bomb, enslaver of peoples, but also the progressive, Leninist–Stalinist bomb, campaigner for peace'.

Haboker (29 September 1949) printed a report by the British Middle East broadcasting station entitled 'The Muslim Population are Guinea Pigs', which said: 'Russian scientists arrange for their experiments to be carried out in one of the Muslim countries of Soviet Russia. These experiments cause the deaths of thousands of people...'

In one of its reprints from foreign papers, *Hador* (11 October 1949) in an article entitled 'Atomgrad No. 1', writes that, allegedly there is an atomic centre in Armenia where tens of thousands of Russian 'convicts' and prisoners-of-war – mostly Germans – live and work like prisoners sentenced to hard labour.

[...]

9. The appointment of Konstantin Rokossovskii as marshal of Poland[4] was used by *Hador* (8 November 1949) for new attacks on the policy of the Soviet Union. In its leading article the paper writes: 'The plan for the sovietization of countries forming the USSR's "security zone" is being carried out at high speed...' Mentioning the 'purges' in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia,[5] the paper writes that the argument for the appointment of Rokossovskii – the marshal's Polish origins – is 'almost sentimental'. Rokossovskii has almost forgotten his Polish, the paper goes on, 'and although he is now refreshing his memory of his ancestors' native language, he will never lose his Moscow accent...'

---

3. Following President Truman's announcement that an atomic explosion had occurred in the USSR (see Doc. 273, n. 2) TASS reported on 25 September that the USSR had had nuclear capability for some time, which was being employed in the construction of hydroelectric power stations, mines, canals and roads.
4. Soviet Marshal Konstantin Rokosovskii was appointed Polish defence minister on 7 November 1949.
5. Reference is to the Laszlo Rajk trial in Hungary (September 1949), the conviction of 55 persons on charges of espionage in Czechoslovakia (November 1949) and the expulsion of Gomulka, Spychalsky and Kliszko from the ruling Polish United Workers (Communist) Party in Poland (November 1949).

Repeating malicious anti-Soviet gossip, the paper writes:

> The favour done to Poland by the appointment of Rokossovskii has a most instructive precedent in Soviet practice: Georgi Dimitrov too was 'put at the disposal' of his native land. There are rumours that this 'favour' was not a success, and in the end, according to rumours, Dimitrov became too friendly with Tito, so friendly that he had to move to a sanatorium near Moscow, and die there in the odour of sanctity.

On 10–13 July 1949 *Hador* printed a long, libellous article by Lubyaniker [Lavon], the secretary-general of the Histadrut, 'When the Hot War Breaks Out', in which he writes:

> The West has understood that it is not the working class and not even the Communist Party which rules in Russia and the countries under its protection. What rules there is the 'line'. There is only one capital offence, and that is if someone at some point has an opinion of his own which differs from that of the Politburo or of the lord and master.

On foreign policy the author writes that the USSR has prepared 'its own Marshall Plan' and that Russia's hostility to Tito was caused by Tito's violation of the 'unity of the system'.

The treachery of Judas–Tito has had wide publicity in the Israeli press. The whole reactionary press is gloating over the treachery of the Tito clique. The fascist newspaper *Herut* and the right-wing socialist *Hador* argue that Tito's regime in Yugoslavia is the ideal communist regime.

These papers try to persuade their readers that the USSR is preparing to attack Yugoslavia. *Hador* (31 August 1949) published a report from Reuters on 'the movement of Soviet units in the direction of the Yugoslav frontier; commenting on the election of Yugoslavia to the Security Council, *Yediot maariv* (3 September 1949) libels the Soviet Union and its representatives and declares Tito's Yugoslavia to be the ideal communist state. The paper writes: 'When you listen to the Russians' speeches at the UN Assembly, you are amazed, first of all, by the form the speeches take, their harsh style and aggressive tone, coming from the rostrum of the world parliament.' Comparing Yugoslavia with Czechoslovakia, the paper writes: 'Tito's government is a communist government. The Yugoslav regime is a deeply rooted out-and-out communist regime. Yugoslavia is 'a country in which communism is more firmly embedded than in the other countries of the Eastern bloc. Czechoslovakia, on the other hand, can be seen as a country which has accepted the existing system, not of its own free will, but under pressure.'

Herut (28 October 1949) wrote: 'According to information from London, the Cominform is preparing to take a number of steps with the aim of overturning Tito's regime. The Cominform intends to stage frontier incidents, which would lead the troops of one or another Cominform state to seize some Yugoslav territory and proclaim a new government there.'

Reporting that the Soviet Union is waging an intensive 'diplomatic and propaganda war against Tito', the reactionary press has been announcing that the Soviet Union will find it difficult to cope with Yugoslavia if it comes to an

armed conflict. *Hador* (31 October 1949) reprinted an article from the *Washington Post* entitled 'Tito Will Fight If He Is Attacked'. This article said:

> Tito fears invasion by Soviet and satellite troops, possibly helped by an uprising of Stalin's supporters inside the country... It is true that Tito is not particularly well liked by the majority of Croats and Slovenes, and less still by the Serbs and Montenegrins, but even so they prefer him to dictatorship by the Kremlin, whose first action on taking power would be collectivization.

By publishing (6 October 1949) Pijade's accusation that 'the Russian Communists have deviated from the principles of Marxism–Leninism', *Hador* openly comes out on the side of Tito.

The apogee of libel against the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and against Comrade Stalin personally is reached by *Haboker* (24 August 1949) in Jon Kimche's article 'Stalin Wants Tito to Go Over to the Side of the West', which says:

> The unspoken intention of the USSR's campaign is to make Yugoslavia go over to the Western camp... This is the only way left to Stalin to liquidate a movement, growing stronger in all the countries of Eastern Europe, in support of Tito's policy of defending national independence against Soviet interference... Tito alive in the Western camp is worth more than Tito dead, for it would prove that Stalin's accusations against Tito as an agent of Western imperialism are true. Stalin used the same tactic when he allowed Trotsky to leave Russia alive, and so was able to declare all Trotsky's supporters to be enemies of the Soviet system.

In its leading article 'Purge in the Hungarian Communist Party', *Hador* (12 September 1949) states that 'Titoism is spreading beyond the frontiers of Yugoslavia' and, defending Tito against the paper *Al hamishmar,* which had rightly condemned him, writes: 'Tito's Yugoslavia is no less a communist country than the Soviet Union... Tito's only crime is that he refused to be a blind tool in the hands of Moscow.'

It should be noted that *Hador* joined the other reactionary Israeli papers in mourning Rajk, which was an insult to the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies.

II.

The reactionary Israeli press gives a slanderous picture of life within the Soviet Union. In particular, it paints an anti-Soviet and Zionist picture of the 'situation of the Jews' in the USSR. Defending the capitalist system, it gives a slanderous impression of the living conditions of the workers in the USSR; it tries to detract from the achievements of Soviet culture, in an effort to paralyze Soviet influence on the workers of Israel.

1. In a review of the film *The Tale of a Real Man, Hador* (1 June 1949) wrote that 'this is the weakest of films... everything in it is done almost in bureaucratic form... tears and joys are measured out with mathematical precision'.

[...]

[*Herut*] (10 July 1949) printed a 'Letter to the Editor'. The author of this letter sees a threat in the way that 'Russian music has taken root among us'. He calls on his readers not to close their eyes to 'an exceptionally serious danger', since 'political propaganda is also conducted by using culture'. He writes: 'It is not surprising that the Russians have taken the trouble to use songs for propaganda purposes – songs which can be accepted by all groups in the population.' The author is dismayed that 'in our country [Israel – M.P.] songs occupy an unnaturally prominent position' and that – worst of all – most of them are sung in Russian.

2. *Herut* (30 August 1949) in an article entitled 'How Much Does a Russian Worker Earn?' and *Hador* in a leading article 'The Worker in the US and the USSR', referring to the conclusions of the 'Norwegian trades union delegation, which visited the US and the USSR', gives a slanderous picture of the position of the working man in the Soviet Union, saying that 'a Russian worker needs half a working day to buy a kilo of rye bread, two working days to buy a kilo of lump sugar, five working days to buy a kilo of beef' and so forth.

With academician Varga's[6] admission of mistakes in his book on the changes in capitalist countries after World War II, *Davar* (14 June 1949) printed an article entitled 'Varga's Mistakes', in which the paper regrets that Varga recanted his original views since they, in the paper's opinion, were absolutely correct. *Hador* (16 October 1949) published an article 'Varga Has Gone, but His Views Have Returned' (reprinted from *US News and World Report*). In this article we read:

> Varga's views contradicted those of some members of the Politburo: Andrei Zhdanov and Voznesenskii, who defeated Varga and expelled him... Now it is becoming clear from various sources that Stalin has come to the conclusion that Varga was right. Zhdanov is dead and Voznesenskii is no longer head of Gosplan or a member of the Politburo.

The author goes on to develop the idea that the capitalist system is strong, and that the Marshall Plan is not a weapon of American imperialism for enslaving other countries, but simply 'the result of the impoverishment and exhaustion of Western Europe'.

3. The reactionary papers write that the position of the Jews in the USSR is 'menacing', the struggle against cosmopolitanism aims to incite people to be antisemitic, that the Jews in the USSR are inclined towards Zionism, and that most of them would emigrate to Israel if they were permitted to do so.

Hador (26 May 1949) printed a 'literal translation' of three letters supposedly received by the editors from Moscow. *Davar* (2 June 1949) printed a 'Letter of a Soviet engineer to his friend in Israel'. The author of the letter in *Hador* expresses his disgust that the paper should print anti-Soviet articles. The purpose of publishing such 'letters' is to demonstrate the paper's 'objectivity': as if to say. these letters condemn the paper, but it publishes them. Once he

6. Eugen Varga, communist economist; played a major role in disputes on economic theory which took place between 1947 amd 1950.

believes in the 'objectivity' of the paper, the reader will believe in the attachment of Soviet Jews to Israel. This is how the story is told:

> On 15 May 1948, when the news came by telegraph, published in all Soviet newspapers – writes the author – profound joy was felt by all Soviet Jews that the Jewish State of Israel had been established. The dreams and efforts of forty generations of Jews were at last crowned with success.

'Soviet engineer' I. Kischelhof goes even further in his letter to *Davar* and proposes a toast, on behalf of the Jews of the Soviet Union, to the State of Israel and its first president, Weizmann. The spuriousness of these letters, or at any rate, of the last one, is plain from the fact that the 'Soviet engineer' thinks it his duty to start by congratulating his friend on his 'move to Palestine, to his historic homeland', which, it is noted elsewhere in the letter, took place thirty-five years ago.

Davar of 13 May 1949 published a report of the congress of Jewish Workers' Committees of America, at which David Dubinsky 'spoke of the "emigration" of Jews from the countries of the Soviet bloc', who, allegedly, are not allowed to go to Israel. In May the same paper carried a series of articles on the 'anti-cosmopolitan campaign' in the Soviet Union. The paper is concerned not so much with the 'campaign against cosmopolitanism' as with the fact that there were many Jews among the 'cosmopolitans' who were being criticized.

Hador (29 August 1949) printed a report on a congress of natives of Bessarabia in Israel, who expressed alarm at rumours of the exile of Jews to Siberia. Characteristically, the guests at the congress included American Jews born in Bessarabia.

[...]

The reactionary press has several times carried reports 'from Paris' by a certain L. Arye, whom we take to be Arye Levavi – the counsellor at the Israeli legation in the USSR. These articles tell about purported meetings with Jews who have left the USSR and who complained about the 'harassment' of Jews there. The author insists that a delegation be sent to the USSR to investigate the situation of the Jews first hand, and to clarify the fate 'of thousands of Zionists who have been living in Kazakhstan and the forests of Yakutia for many years'.

'The growth of antisemitism' and 'the expulsion of Jews' is the subject of an 'interview' in the newspaper *Yediot aharanot* (2 November 1949) with Dr. Grossmann, aged 47, an old Zionist activist and lawyer from Poland, who is described as 'a Jew from Russia.'

From May to the beginning of November 1949, the newspapers *Hador, Davar, Haboker* and others, and especially the evening paper *Yediot aharanot* printed a lot of material about 'the attacks on Professor I.I. Mints', 'the arrest of Jewish writers in Moscow', 'the disappearance of the Jewish writers Fefer, Bergelson and Markish', '400,000 Jews sent into exile in Russia' and the 'possible resettlement of a million Jews from the Ukraine and Belorussia to

Birobidzhan'. There is a report that 'all the Jewish officers in the Russian army who were in Germany have returned to Russia. Many of them have been arrested because recently a large number of Jewish soldiers in the Russian army escaped to the Western zones of Germany in order to go on to Israel' (*Yediot aharanot* 19 July 1949), and it is said that Jews are leaving for Siberia because 'a change of climate is needed', etc.

The greater part of this anti-Soviet libel comes from 'our New York correspondent', from 'various American circles', from the 'club of Jewish writers in the US', from the 'American Jewish Committee for the Struggle against Communism', or is simply served up as a review of 'American Newspapers on the Anti-Zionist Campaign in the USSR' (*Davar*, 9 November 1949), in which a 'report from our former Moscow correspondent Joseph Newman' is reprinted. In this 'report' Newman writes that 'measures have been taken to isolate Soviet Jews from the Israeli legation. The staff of the legation was put under close surveillance both in the hotel[7] and outside it.' Again, Newman writes about 'antisemitism [in the USSR – M.P.] disguised as anti-Zionism'.

III.

Anti-Soviet propaganda reaches a particularly loathsome pitch in filthy provocative attacks and libels against the leaders of the Soviet Union and against Comrades Stalin and Lenin personally.

Apart from gossip about Comrade Gromyko's son (*Herut*, 1 November 1949), a joke about Comrade Vyshinskii (*Yediot aharanot*, 19 June 1949), some gossip about 'General Vasilii Stalin' (*Hador*, 4 August 1949), about 'Svetlana Stalin's love affair' (*Yediot aharanot*, 7 October 1949), and about the 'Soviet Union's first lady' (this piece of gossip is presented as an interview in a news review given in Paris by 'Pvanidze, Stalin's first cousin, who followed the path of Kravchenko'[8]). The papers print a good many revolting libels and provocative articles about Comrade Stalin himself. '*Yom yom*' of 14 June 1949 wrote that the jury at the competition for the best statue of Pushkin had awarded the first prize for a 'statue of Stalin reading a volume of Pushkin'. *Herut* of 13 June 1949 carried an article entitled 'Protecting Stalin's Life', and on 24 June 1949, an article entitled 'Stalin is Looking for Ways to Avoid Death', while *Yom yom* of 27 June 1949 printed Nathan Gordus' article 'Is Stalin Ill?'.

There is a filthy libel on Lenin the man and Lenin the leader, and on the Bolshevik Party, in an article entitled 'Lenin' by Ch. Greenberg (the leader of Mapai in America) in the July issue of the journal *Beterem*. The author maligns Lenin the man, and slanders the AUCP(b) and the moving forces of the October Socialist Revolution. He writes:

> In 1917 Lenin had neither a strong and numerous organization, nor any contact with the army. There was no clearly defined Bolshevik strategy. The whole of

7. In the autumn of 1948 the Israeli mission in Moscow was temporarily located in the Metropol Hotel.
8. Soviet security officer who defected to the West.

> Lenin's equipment consisted of some irrational notion that he was returning to Russia in order to fulfil a great historic mission. Together with this 'messianic consciousness' he was ready to sign promissory notes, although he knew that he would not be able to redeem them... With the instincts of a beast from the jungle, he weighed precisely the strength and weakness of the factors then present in Russia', that is, the positive and negative factors.

Even more disgusting libel against the leaders of the AUCP(b) and against Comrade Stalin appeared in an article in *Haboker* (30 September 1949) reprinted from the Swiss journal *Die Weltwoche*.

* * *

After the celebration of the 32nd anniversary of the Great October Revolution, a new wave of anti-Soviet propaganda swept through the reactionary Israeli press.

On 10 November 1949, *Haboker* printed a lead article, 'A Lesson in Alignment', with malicious comments on the reception held in the Israeli legation in Moscow for the October anniversary.

The October issue of *Beterem* carries V. Shvivi's anti-Soviet article, 'The Great Lie', in which the author slanders the Soviet Union's domestic and foreign policy. He writes: 'The essence of the great lie is that for many years there has not been a shred of socialism in the Soviet Union. It is years now since any sign distinguishing the Soviet regime from fascist regimes has been obliterated.'

On 11 November 1949 *Yediot aharanot* published 'An Open Letter to Mr. Ershov', in which the author, Dr. Rosenblum, who took offence at not being invited to a reception at the legation, attacks the Soviet minister in insulting terms and indulges in a number of anti-Soviet outbursts.

On 2 November 1949, *Maariv* published a feuilleton, entitled 'False Alarm', in which Carlebach, the author of the piece, as well as the paper's editor, reports in sarcastic and insulting terms a conversation which supposedly took place between the Soviet minister and the legation's counsellor about a demonstration by the Mapam party's youth on 5 November 1949 (article attached).

[...]

Attached: 15 articles from the Israeli press.

Attaché at the USSR Legation in Israel
M. Popov

285
M.P. Fedorin to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.4, D.29, LL.218–21
Tel Aviv, 7 December 1949
Secret

CELEBRATION OF THE 32ND ANNIVERSARY
OF THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION IN THE STATE OF ISRAEL

In Israel this year celebrations of the 32nd anniversary of the October Revolution were undertaken mainly by the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR. Timely preparations for the celebrations enabled the league to hold festive meetings in many towns and settlements throughout the country. There were also meetings organized separately by the Communist Party of Israel and Mapam. Altogether, about 40 such meetings were held, in Tel Aviv, Haifa, Jerusalem, Nazareth, Jaffa, Rishon Lezion, Hadera and so forth. Tens of thousands of people took part in the meetings.

On 4 November, a large festive gathering was held in Tel Aviv on the premises of Beit Haam [House of the People]. More than three thousand people attended. The hall was decorated with the flags of the USSR and Israel. On the podium were large portraits of Lenin and Stalin and the slogan 'Long live the 32nd Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution'.

The meeting began with the national anthems of the Soviet Union and Israel. The secretary-general of the league, Dr. Sneh, made a long speech about the achievements of the Soviet Union in the 32 years of its existence. In his speech, Sneh presented a vivid picture of the growth of the economy in the Soviet Union and the flourishing of industry, agriculture, culture and science.

'The achievements of the Soviet Union, led by the Party of Lenin and Stalin', the speaker said, 'are the achievements of the international proletariat.' Sneh went on to emphasize the Soviet Union's leading role in the struggle for peace of the progressive forces of all mankind. The speech made use of material sent by VOKS.

After Dr. Sneh's lecture, Mikunis, secretary-general of the Communist Party of Israel, took the floor, and dwelt on the historic victories of the October Revolution, on the leading role of the party of Lenin and Stalin, and on the inevitable victory of communism and downfall of capitalism. He called for the strengthening of friendly relations with the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies and for strengthening of the forces of progress in the struggle for peace.

The next speaker was Riftin, secretary of the Mapam Party Central Committee, who pointed to the development of culture and science in the Soviet Union and to the consistency of the USSR's foreign policy.

Delegations of workers from large enterprises in Tel Aviv greeted the gathering and congratulated Comrade P.I. Ershov, the USSR minister in Israel, on the occasion of the 32nd anniversary of the October Revolution.

Comrade Ershov made a brief reply and was greeted with resounding applause.

After the speeches, the participants rose to their feet to welcome the dispatch of a congratulatory telegram to I.V. Stalin with a thunderous ovation lasting several minutes.

On the cultural side, music and songs by Soviet composers were performed.

Very successful festive meetings were also held in other towns.

At meetings organized in Haifa and Jerusalem on 5 November, each attended by 1,500 people, major speeches about the achievements of the Soviet Union were made by Wilner, secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel, and Dr. Sneh. The participants in these meetings expressed their sympathy with stormy applause whenever Comrade Stalin's name, or the Soviet government, or the consistent peaceful policy of the Soviet Union was mentioned. The meetings in Haifa and Jerusalem were attended by Comrades Mukhin and Fedorin, representing the Soviet legation in Israel, who spoke briefly.

It should be noted that the meetings throughout the country this year were of a mass character. They took place in an atmosphere of friendship towards the Soviet Union which reflects the sentiments of the broad masses of the Israeli population.

On 4 November, the day of the festive gatherings in Tel Aviv, the newspapers *Kol haam* (the organ of the Communist Party of Israel), *Al hamishmar* (the organ of Mapam) and *Bashaar* (the organ of Mapam's youth organization) were devoted to the anniversary of the October Revolution and the achievements of the Soviet Union in economics, culture, science, etc.

The league also put out a special bulletin for the 32nd anniversary of the October Revolution.

On 5 November, Mapam organized a youth demonstration in honour of the 32nd anniversary of the October Revolution. A column of demonstrators with red flags marched past the USSR legation. A delegation of the demonstrators congratulated Comrade Ershov, the USSR minister, on the anniversary and gave presents from Israel's progressive youth to the Leninist Komsomol.

On 7 November, the legation received numerous congratulations and bouquets of flowers from various progressive organizations and individuals who are friends of the Soviet Union.

After such celebrations, conducted by the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR, Mapai's Committee for Friendly Relations with the USSR found it embarrassing to keep silent in the face of public opinion. They decided to organize a session of the committee devoted to the 32nd anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The meeting was held on 10 November in

a small hall in the Tel Aviv Museum. About 300 people were present. The podium was not decorated at all. National anthems were not sung either at the beginning or at the end of the meeting. Professor Dinaburg, the chairman of the committee, opened the meeting. He was followed by Klinov (director of the Ministry of Interior Department of Information and Cinema), who spoke about relations between the USSR and Israel, Halevi (the artistic director of the Ohel Theatre), who spoke about Soviet theatre, and Eliashiv (director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs East European Division) who gave his impressions of his visit to the Soviet Union.

None of the speakers even mentioned the October Revolution, its role, significance, etc. The public listened to the speeches with great restraint.

The meeting was purely academic in character, had nothing in common with a festive celebration, and was distinguished by its restraint compared to the mass festive gatherings conducted by the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

In conclusion we should note that the mass demonstration of friendly feelings towards the Soviet Union, which took place during the celebration of the 32nd anniversary of the October Revolution, caused some alarm among reactionary and government circles in Israel. In order to minimize the significance of the sympathy shown by the progressive masses of the population for the USSR, the reactionary press – evidently prompted – began an anti-Soviet campaign immediately after 7 November, attacking the progressive forces in Israel, in particular the Communist Party and Mapam, and accusing them of servility and so forth.

The progressive press responded promptly to these attacks by the reactionary papers, dismissed them and rose to the defence of the Soviet Union and the strengthening of friendship between the USSR and Israel.

The celebrations of the October Revolution in Israel, with the active participation of the broad masses, have shown that the progressive forces in the country have a significant influence among the population, and that, with proper leadership of the Communist Party and Mapam and close cooperation between these parties, they can carry significant weight in Israel.

Enclosure: newspapers *Kol haam*, *Al hamishmar* and *Bashaar*; bulletin of the league (two copies).[1]

Second Secretary of the USSR Legation in Israel
M. Fedorin

1. The league's bulletin was called *Yedidut Yisrael–Brit Hamoatsot*.

286
Meeting: A.D. Shchiborin – A. Levavi (Moscow, 7 December 1949)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.3, D.5, LL.56–8
Secret

At 14.30 today I received Levavi at his request. After the usual exchange of greetings, Levavi said that he had been instructed by his government to inform the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel's point of view on the question of the statute for Jerusalem. This would supplement conversations between Sharett, the minister of foreign affairs, and Comrade Tsarapkin at the UN session, and between Eytan, the secretary-general of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Minister Ershov.[1]

The importance of the city of Jerusalem for Israel, Levavi said, was quite obvious, since 10 per cent of the population of Israel lived in Jerusalem. These people did not want to be separated from the State of Israel. Moreover, the war had shown the necessity of including the Jewish part of Jerusalem in the territory of Israel. The Israeli point of view on this question had recently been expressed in parliament by Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, who stated that the question of Jerusalem could not be resolved without the agreement of the Jewish population of the city and the government of Israel.[2]

The government of Israel thinks that the internationalization of Jerusalem would have negative results and would damage the interests not only of Israel but also of the Soviet Union. The internationalization of the city would disturb the present peaceful situation in Palestine, for the Jews would begin a struggle for their rights.

Levavi hinted clearly at the possibility of military initiatives by the Jews and the resumption of partisan and terrorist activity by Jewish organizations.

'The Soviet Union', Levavi continued, 'has an interest in supporting peace in the Middle East; it follows that a resumption of war in Palestine would be incompatible with the aims of the Soviet Union.'

Apart from this – Levavi added – the government of Israel believed that the Soviet government was much concerned with Jerusalem because of the large property interests of the Russian Church in Palestine. As is well known, during the British Mandate in Palestine the British authorities handed over responsibility for this property to reactionary anti-Soviet persons, who put an end to any connection with the Russian Church.[3]

After their troops had occupied part of Jerusalem, the Israeli authorities repealed all the laws enacted by the British with regard to Russian property.[4] Anybody who had been in charge of this property under the British escaped to Transjordan. The Israeli authorities provided all the conditions necessary for

1. See Docs. 280 and 282.
2. For excerpts from Ben-Gurion's statement in the Knesset, see Doc. 282, n. 1.
3. See Doc. 45 and notes there.
4. See Doc. 222.

establishing a close link between the Russian Church and its property in Palestine, which would not have been possible, Levavi added, if international organizations had come to Jerusalem. If Jerusalem were placed under an international regime, this link could easily be broken because the people from the past would again take charge of Russian property in Palestine. In spite of the fact that the Soviet Union was a member of the Trusteeship Council, the decisive role in the council, and in this matter, would be played by other forces, and the possibility could not be excluded that the USSR might even lose this property. Moreover, Russian property in Palestine was an important economic and political factor: in 1939 it was valued at £18 million.

The chances of implementing internationalization of the city, in the Israeli government's opinion, were very small. The government understood the Soviet Union's reluctance to be reconciled to a Transjordanian regime in Jerusalem, but the situation would be even worse if the people who stood behind Abdallah and had a decisive voice in the UN were to gain control of the whole city.

I answered that I would report the chargé d'affaires' statement to my superiors in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As for the property in Palestine, the USSR's rights to it were absolute and incontrovertible and did not depend on the fate of Jerusalem. I added that, as Levavi knew, the question of transferring the property to us had, unfortunately, not yet been settled with the government of Israel either.

The conversation lasted 20 minutes.

V. Gnedykh, attaché at the Near and Middle East Department, was present.[5]

Deputy Director of the Near and Middle East Department
USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs
A. Shchiborin

287
G. Rafael to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2443/5
New York, 13 December 1949

RE: MEETING WITH TSARAPKIN

On the day of the vote on Jerusalem[1] I met with Tsarapkin in the representatives' lounge. I wanted to explain to him the difference between municipal expenditures and an overall budget for government services, since in his

Doc. 286

5. Copies to Gromyko, Zorin, Lavrent'ev and the Department of UN Affairs.

Doc. 287

1. The vote took place on 9 December. The draft resolution sponsored by the Australians and calling for internationalization was approved. The Soviet delegation and Eastern bloc countries supported the resolution.

speech he quoted figures based on Jerusalem's municipal budget. The explanation led to a conversation, in which Tsarapkin gave a coherent exposition of his views on the entire Palestine question. In what follows I will summarize his remarks, without noting my reply.

(1) The partition of Jerusalem between Israel and Jordan effectively constitutes a partition of Palestine between us and Abdallah.

(2) Confirmation of this partition means agreement to British consolidation in Jerusalem and in eastern Palestine, since Abdallah operates as a direct agent of Britain.

(3) British consolidation means assistance to the United States in its aggressive preparations for a third world war.

(4) Our agreement to partitioning Jerusalem furthers these plans and strengthens the Anglo-Americans in the Middle East.

(5) The inhabitants of Jerusalem will oppose implementation of the UN resolution only if the Anglo-Americans incite them in that direction. Just as the Arabs would not have attacked Israel a year ago without vigorous incitement by the Anglo-Americans, so the State of Israel will not rise up against the UN of its own free will.

(6) If, nevertheless, we oppose the UN resolution, the Security Council will have to invoke its authority.

(7) The Soviet Union's policy towards the Palestine question is definitely consistent. The 29 November program consists of three parts. Part I, establishment of the Jewish state, has been realized; Part II, establishment of an international regime in Jerusalem, is about to be fulfilled; Part III, establishment of an independent Arab state, will be carried out following the realization of Parts I and II of the program, and the Soviet Union will insist that an independent Arab state be established in the eastern area of Palestine.

(8) Our behaviour in the [General] Assembly proves that we are heavily inclined towards the side of the United States. On no issue have we taken a stand that is absolutely contrary to that of the United States, while on matters that are vital to the Soviet Union and the UN as a whole we have voted against the Soviet Union. As an example he mentioned our vote [on the motion] condemning the preparations for a new war by Britain and the United States. He emphasized that from their point of view this was the most important motion on the Assembly's' agenda. Not only did we vote against them, we affiliated ourselves with the Anglo-Saxon motion. He added that he did not wish to argue with us about our votes, since we were free to vote and decide as we liked.

(9) After all he had said, I asked him straight out whether our country was not the most independent in the Middle East. He replied, after weighing the matter and hesitating – more or less.

288
M. Buev, K.A. Mikhailov and A.D. Shchiborin to A.A. Gromyko (Moscow)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.2, P.4, D.29, LL.224–5
Moscow, 14 December 1949

Secret

To Comrade A.A. Gromyko,

In accordance with Point 2 of the resolution of the collegium of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 28 November 1949, on Point VIII of the agenda – 'The draft letter to Comrade S.V. Kaftanov about the political map of Asia', the Legal Department, the South-East Asia Department and the Near and Middle East Department report as follows:

[...][1]

2. In mapping Palestine we think it expedient to be guided by the General Assembly resolution of 29 November [1947] on the partition of Palestine. In accordance with this resolution, Palestine should be shown without the explanatory suffix 'British Mandate', and with its territory in a different colour from that which is usual for British possessions. The map should keep the title 'Palestine'.

On the territory of Palestine, the State of Israel should be shown with the frontiers established by the above-mentioned resolution of the UN General Assembly, and should be shown in the same colour as Palestine, but in a darker shade, with the title 'State of Israel'.

The territory of the city of Jerusalem should be distinguished by a special colour, with the boundaries established according to the same resolution. The map should carry a note: 'The frontiers of the State of Israel and the city of Jerusalem are shown in accordance with the resolution of the UN General Assembly of 29 November 1947.'

In the remaining part of Palestine – the so-called Arab state – figure 1 should be included, as shown on the attached map. In the map's legend this figure should be explained, to the effect that these are 'territories forming the Arab state in accordance with the General Assembly resolution of 29 November 1947'.

M. Buev, K. Mikhailov, A. Shchiborin

1. Part 1, dealing with delineation of the borders of Indonesia, has been omitted.

289
Y. Barnea to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2383/29
Moscow, 2 January 1950
Private

Dear Moshe,

[...][1]

There is nothing for a military attaché to do here, and I dare say, without prejudicing my natural modesty (?), that I can not even blame myself. I repeat that there is absolutely nothing for me to do here as long as present circumstances continue, both here and worldwide. Under current circumstances it is not possible to do anything at all.

The point is that all my work is built on the relations that I am meant to establish with local military personnel. With the help of these relations a person in my position is supposed to reach official, legitimate sources of information in order to get from them whatever is worthy of perusal and study. The normal practice everywhere is that in peacetime these sources permit [attachés] passive participation at seasonal manoeuvres, military demonstrations, tests of weapons – if they are no longer considered 'secret' – and close monitoring of military operations in wartime. It is also normal for the government to supply information to military attachés, both at their request and on its own initiative. (Again, the exceptions are secret information, such as deployment of forces, number of personnel in actual service, etc. Nevertheless, about three weeks ago the British War Office published the number of soldiers currently serving in the three armed services in the *Times*.)

However, owing to the circumstances prevailing here, and throughout the world – for some time before my arrival here – maintaining relations on a regular basis with the local military personnel, let alone cultivating them, is out of the question. The maximum access that the government permits the military attachés is the Office for External Affairs at the Ministry of Armed Forces, through which and by means of which they have to apply to the government, and vice versa; it is through this same ministry that the government deals with the attachés – i.e., conveys to them invitations to receptions held by the government, to the parade of 7 November, etc., all very important activities. In short, this ministry, which is headed by a general, serves as a post office which operates efficiently as long as it deals with invitations, but ceases to operate completely the moment things go beyond that. In that case – you simply don't get an answer; if you applied verbally, they ask you to reapply in writing, and they don't answer letters. This is very well known in Moscow; no one disputes it.

---

1. Three paragraphs describing social and diplomatic life in Moscow have been omitted.

The regime does not want any more than this. And that determines my opportunities and those of all my colleagues. Why do they tolerate it? I don't know. It may well be that attachés of other countries are not appalled by this situation as long as they receive their salaries and accumulate seniority. But as for me – I feel uneasy being unable to forget that, on the one hand, my fruitless stay here costs the Treasury 400 Israel pounds a month (and in dollars, too!), and that, on the other, I could, after all, be doing something *useful* in Israel during this time.

In my opinion, there is no point to my being here in the position I now hold as long as present conditions prevail (and we can assume that they will become even worse). And if anyone would argue that my being here is necessary to put on a good show and enlarge the legation's representation – then I ask in all seriousness: at what price?

Perhaps you could give the matter your consideration, Moshe? And if you would, please let me know accordingly.[2]

All the best. And best regards to you, to Zippora[3] and the boys from Shoshana and myself.

Yours in sincere friendship,

Yisrael Barnea

290
A.Ia. Vyshinskii to P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.24, P.27, D.154, LL.5–6.
Moscow, 9 January 1950

We questioned Tsarapkin and Zinchenko, who said that they had not told Sharett what he attributed to them.[1]

Doc. 289

2. See Docs. 292, 304.
3. Sharett's wife.

Doc. 290

1. The original document begins with '3' – apparently a typing error.
   Although the precise point in question is not clear, this is presumably a response to Ershov's report of the proceedings of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee on 28 December 1949. This committee, which held its session *in camera*, heard Sharett's account of his meetings with Tsarapkin and Zinchenko when attending the Fourth Session of the UN General Assembly in New York (see Doc. 287 and proceedings of the Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, ISA 60/7561/12, pp. 22, 31). The proceedings of the committee were leaked more or less on a regular basis to the Soviet legation by Yaacov Riftin, a Mapam representative on the committee (see Docs. 298, 331, 350 and 355; for Riftin's position within Mapam and his Marxist ideology, see Zahor, *Hazan*.

In a conversation with Malik, Sharett broached the question of the desirability of the emigration of Jews from the USSR to Israel.[2] He tried to justify this by the lack of an autonomous Jewish republic in the USSR and by Israel's need for Jewish cadres from Eastern Europe, who by virtue of their level of political and cultural development could provide the basis for Israel's state building and its defence. Recent immigrants from the backward countries of the Near East and Asia require many years for their political and cultural development, whereas experience has shown that those who come from the Slavic countries quickly become active and enterprising builders and defenders of the Jewish state. In conclusion Sharett said that it would be a good thing if the USSR allowed 50 or 30 [*sic*] thousand Soviet Jews to leave for Israel. Malik answered that the Jews in the USSR were citizens who enjoyed equal rights with all other citizens, and that in our country, especially after such a large and long war, every citizen was needed as an active participant in rebuilding the economy and culture and repairing the destruction caused by the war. Moreover, the emigration of Soviet people to a country with different social conditions would contradict the basic principles of the Soviet state. Sharett ended the conversation with the rejoinder that he regretted that it was impossible to resolve this question positively.

291
USSR Legation in Israel to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

COPY: ISA 130.09/2507/12
Tel Aviv, 23 January 1950

The legation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has received from a number of Soviet citizens, who live on the territory of the State of Israel, statements that they are being called up for military service on the basis of the law of the State of Israel on conscription, which came into force on 1 October 1949.[1]

Doc. 290

2. Sharett and Malik met in New York in December 1949 during Sharett's attendance at the UN in December 1949. The minutes of the Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, where Sharett referred to the meeting, make no mention of emigration. At a later statement to the same forum on 1 September 1950, Sharett referred to a discussion with Malik on emigration (see Doc. 331 and ISA 60/7562/5, p. 23) which was probably the one discussed here. The meeting with Malik was presumably arranged after Sharett's failure to meet Vyshinskii (see Doc. 305).

Doc. 291

1. On 14 January 1950, the Soviet minister in Israel reported to Moscow that eight Soviet citizens had asked the legation for assistance in obtaining an exemption from the Israeli army (see AVP RF, f.059, op.24, p.52, d.332, l.19). On 19 January 1950, USSR Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko sent Ershov a telegram containing the text of the present document. The text was also endorsed by Vyshinskii (see AVP RF, f.059, op.24, p.27, d.154, l.12).

The legation thinks it necessary to draw the attention of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the fact that calling up foreigners for military service in this way is not in keeping with generally recognized principles of international law, according to which a state can not, compulsorily, conscript foreigners living on its territory for its defence if there is no agreement with the government of the country of which these persons are citizens.

The legation expects the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take the necessary measures to exempt Soviet citizens living in Israel from conscription into the armed forces of the State of Israel.[2]

292
M. Namir to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2382/29
Moscow, 25 January 1950
Top Secret/By Messenger

Dear Mr. Sharett,

In report no. 4, last page, from our military attaché, Colonel Barnea, we find this conclusion:[1]

> In this situation, as described above – naturally, we can not even dream about cultivating friendly relations – absolutely not. True, besides social relations there are also, of course, formal relations. But these begin and end with a visit to General Seraev upon the attaché's arrival in Moscow and greetings at the annual parades: First of May, Air Force Day (in September), and 7 November. More than that is not done here. I went beyond strict necessity and invited myself for another interview with Seraev in December – I came to ask him for information (on the interview itself I sent you a report the following day).[2] Naturally I got nothing of what I had sought, but the visit itself was something of a surprise. These, then, are the possibilities of contact with the Soviet army, and these are the circumstances here.

Doc. 291

2. As instructed, Ershov handed this note to Director-General of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs Eytan, on 23 January. According to Ershov's account to Moscow, Eytan asked to be given the list of Soviet citizens but Ershov refused, emphasizing that the issue at stake was not personal but one of principle. Eytan promised to discuss the matter with the military authorities (see AVP RF, f.059, op.24, p.52, d.332, l.27). His account of this meeting, dated 2 February 1950, states that he asked the minister whether the legation would agree to certify, in each individual case, that the person applying for an exemption was, in fact, a Soviet citizen. Ershov promised to consider the matter (see ISA 130.11/2501/17). For the Israeli response to the Soviet note, see Doc. 300.

Doc. 292

1. Only a summary of this report, dated 26 March 1950, has been found in the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs files (ISA 130.11/2495/13).
2. See undated summary of this report in ISA 130.11/2495/13.

> There is no need to conduct a full-fledged study of the situation in order to reach the conclusion that in these conditions my being here is of no use whatsoever, if we ignore the private pleasure(?) my wife and I derive from our life here in a health resort. Although I have to admit that this pleasure also begins to fade after nearly three months.
>
> Therefore, I suggest, taking into account: (a) the uselessness of my being here; (b) the lack of prospects of a change in the situation – without a change in the global situation; (c) the very high price that the state is paying from the Defence Ministry budget for my residence here; (d) and the small benefit I might bring if I were in Israel – [taking all this into account, I suggest] reconsidering urgently whether a military attaché should continue to be maintained here.
>
> My considered opinion on the matter – after close observation, personal experience of three months, and an examination of the situation in other legations – is that there is no need for a military attaché and that it would be unjustified if the state decided otherwise.
>
> For your information: of 44 diplomatic missions in Moscow only 17 have military attachés, including nine countries of the [Soviet] bloc, while 27, including missions of countries that have a common border with the Soviet Union, do not.

I would like to make the following comments:

I do not wish to dispute Mr. Barnea's basic assessment that from a professional military point of view and the possibilities of learning something in this area here – there is nothing to be gained from maintaining a military attaché at this time. However, there is nothing new in this and we were well aware of it both here and in Israel, as was Mr. Barnea from his conversations with Colonel Ratner, long before his appointment. If, nevertheless, the opinion was accepted that this position should continue to be maintained here, there would be, in my view, two main reasons for this:

(a) Not to leave the entire East without a military attaché at a time when we have added a deputy or two in the United States, and in view of the distortions about our army being built according to American methods, technical aid from 'American generals', and the like.

(b) To prevent the outward impression that we are already 'disappointed' in this regard – especially when it is no loss (on the contrary) if the 'Westerners' are a little anxious deep in their hearts over the possibility that – despite everything – our military attaché is 'hanging around' here because the Russians and Israel have an interest in this.

I will not deal here with the other points in the above conclusion. However, in my humble opinion the two reasons I have just mentioned, and especially the first, are still valid. Just as I have no doubt that the complete and absolute stoppage of the purchase of goods here during the past seven to eight months because the Russians have not yet placed commercial credit at our disposal is a grave political mistake which will be used 'when the time comes' as supporting evidence for other, less justified, claims against us. (I will return to this subject separately.)

In general, given the currently prevailing atmosphere in the world, there is perhaps no concrete usefulness even in keeping up diplomatic relations between the East and the non-East, in maintaining costly missions, and so forth. But the truth is that there is no other 'matter' that 'moves', passes, and swings from one extreme to the other like foreign policy and foreign relations. Therefore, it behooves us to refrain from [taking] steps that appear very logical and sober today, if it is not absolutely certain that they will not turn out to be incorrect and even harmful tomorrow or the day after. This rule applies, I believe, most rigourously to us. Who knows whether we can expect a 'good life' with the Eastern bloc in the near future. On the face of it, there is no basis for optimism. However, for our part we must absolutely not, without extreme necessity, take even the slightest step to hasten such processes. Where is the certainty that the current Cold War will last forever? However you look at it: if it continues and is aggravated there is a concrete danger that it will enter, in one form or another, a 'hot' phase, and then – it is terrifying even to contemplate the outcome. And if not, the inescapable conclusion is that a temporary *modus vivendi* will be found in relations between the two blocs, and then a few things might change for the better. In the meantime, it is the duty of our policy to hold on to the fringes of the status quo of 'friendly relations' with the East, even if we assume that it consists only of an exterior shell.

From this general point of view, I wanted to comment on our relations with Romania following the recall of their minister from Tel Aviv,[3] an event that does not reinforce our standing *vis-à-vis* the West either. However, as I was writing this letter the Israeli papers arrived, and the demagogic attempt of various opposition groups to profit from this issue leaves me psychologically incapable of addressing the subject. Therefore, I will try to 'be wise in retrospect' and be content to note one fact only: while Dr. Eliashiv was here I gave him detailed reasons for my view that after Cioroiu was sent to us (according to rumour, one of the few Romanian diplomats who did not take a prejudiced, negative attitude towards us) we should have delayed any changes and left Mr. Rubin[4] in his post for an additional period, in the meantime extending Cioroiu a great and pronounced welcome, and waited patiently to see how relations developed in the future. Mr. Eliashiv agreed completely with this opinion.

It is possible that I am not aware of all the aspects of the issue and that the course of past events, as they in fact occurred, could not have been otherwise. In any event, if I may be permitted this time to deviate from 'my jurisdiction', we should, I think, prevent the widening of the breach and try to rectify it quickly as far as is possible. And at least: to preserve the status quo of a minister posted specifically to Romania, without adding other countries, and the like.

---

3. The Romanian minister in Israel, Nicolae Cioroiu, was recalled to Bucharest in January 1950 following the recall of the Israeli minister from Bucharest (see also Doc. 246, n. 7).
4. Reuven Rubin, Israel's minister to Romania.

As for our relations with the East in general, I would say: forbearance and patient restraint to the utmost limits possible. The only exceptions are matters that are absolutely vital to our interests.

Our conception of friendly neutrality can not be realized in similar fashion *vis-à-vis* the two blocs. To obtain friendship and support in the West, our political leaders can permit themselves to criticize and attack a particular government and try to arouse public opinion there against it, or to base our activity on an internal opposition party, which might replace the existing government. In both instances there is no enmity here towards the country that is criticized, only an attempt to secure its friendly attitude. However, the situation in the East is completely different. 'Public opinion' other than governmental is non-existent, nor should we expect a change of government. Therefore, any external offence against an Eastern government, its authorized representatives or its leaders is interpreted here exclusively as an injury to the state. Relations with the East are with governments only. Our neutrality towards the East is not, therefore, exempt from constantly making these distinctions and weighing its deeds and its words on the basis of this 'discrimination' between the two blocs.

On the face of it, my remarks can easily be considered undignified moral opportunism. However, that view would be both unjust and superficial. I hope you will not impute any intention to me other than opposition to hasty conclusions and actions regarding the future of our relations with the East and sincere soul-searching over the practical question of what duty binds us to do and not to do in order to avoid aggravating relations with that bloc within the framework of the realistic conditions that exist today in this part of the world.

Returning, after my lengthy digressions to explain unoriginal ideas, to the question of Mr. Barnea, I would not want my remarks to be construed as meaning that we must not under any conditions dispense with the post of military attaché here. Nor do I ignore the fact that Colonel Ratner was invited several times to the Ministry of Armed Forces for conversations which at the time even gave rise to hopes that we might acquire various types of weapons, etc. – hopes that finally proved unfounded. When I met with you in Paris, I expressed the opinion that if the second year of our presence in Moscow should also be one of (professional) idleness for the military attaché, there would perhaps be no point in continuing with this. However, I do not think that anything new has occurred in the past three months that would require an urgent revision of our general approach, and I am absolutely against Mr. Barnea's concrete conclusion.

If we were to accept it, the Soviet Union would undoubtedly view it with complete indifference, but it should not be inferred from this that they would not use the issue against us should the need arise.

Moreover, if Cold War tension does not dissipate we should also take into account the bleak possibility of a cessation of diplomatic relations (perhaps only de facto) between East and West, and this may well begin with the

military attachés. From this point of view as well, it is far from desirable that the Israeli legation should conform to the West.

In fact, my suggestion is that we take up this matter again in May–June, after our Independence Day and the Soviet parade on the First of May.

Yours sincerely,

M. Namir

293
M. Namir to Sh. Eliashiv (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 1 February 1950

Your 303.[1] There is no possibility here of clarifying North Korea's intentions. Our vote in favour will seriously upset the Eastern bloc and China especially, which sees South Korea as a mortal foe. Soviet attention is now focused critically on East Asia and its sensitivity to events in that region is unlimited. After Korea in its two parts comes the turn of Vietnam, and we should not rule out the possibility that rival governments will also be established in other countries in the Far East where armed uprisings are occurring. The best course we can follow is complete abstention regarding these embroiled regions. We have no vital interests *vis-à-vis* Korea that obligate us to deviate from the basic rule of non-, I repeat non-intervention, in this acute dispute between the blocs. Our vote in favour will be taken as preparing the way for political recognition and not, I repeat not, as a technical act, whereas abstention, whatever its practical results, remains abstention at least in theory, and leaves the door open for a change of position when circumstances change. Similarly, we have to take into account that in recent weeks we have been attacked in the press here with regard to Morgenthau,[2] the *Kol haam* trial,[3] and so forth, and as long as we can we should avoid furnishing another excuse at this time. Our country

1. Eliashiv had reported indecision in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the vote on South Korea's admission to the International Telecommunications Union. Israel had thus far abstained in all votes on South Korea, but now the tendency was to vote in favour, both because a two-thirds majority was necessary in this case and abstention was equivalent to a negative vote, and because the work of this organization was technical, not political (telegram of 29 Jan. 1950, ISA 130.09/2325/3).
2. Henry Morgenthau, chairman of the United Jewish Appeal in the United States and secretary of the treasury in Truman's administration, visited Israel in order to consult and advise on the country's financial and economic problems. During his visit, he made several political declarations calling for greater Israeli identification with the United States and for more active participation in the defence against communism. Morgenthau's declaration aroused public comment, including a Knesset debate (see *Divrei haknesset*, Vol. III, pp. 634–7).
3. Reference is to libel case initiated by Ben-Gurion against the communist daily *Kol haam*. The paper accused Ben-Gurion of using publicly 'rabble-rousing language such as only traitors to their people have dared use'.

was also kept out of the Postal Union for a lengthy period and our right to use the Shield of David emblem[4] was rejected, and it was no catastrophe. Incidentally, in both these cases the Eastern bloc supported us. My conclusion: continue to abstain. This is also the view of Levavi and Barnea.[5]

Namir

294
M. Namir to Sh. Eliashiv (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 2 February 1950

Re your open cable 7829.[1] I am not ignoring the fact that negative reports about us in the local press have increased. However, it is my duty to comment:

(a) According to the concepts that prevail here, and in comparison to TASS cables from other countries, the news from Tel Aviv is formulated relatively favourably and in any event is not much worse than the reports from other neutral countries such as Switzerland and Sweden, and even Pakistan whose friendship the Soviet Union seeks.

(b) With one or two exceptions the cables quote the Israeli press.

(c) To the best of my information, every attempt to question the tendentious thrust of the press encounters a routine reply that the press here is free and is not subject to control.

(d) In my view there is no point or purpose in taking the matter up with the legation or the correspondent other than in cases of supreme importance or on an occasion when the Russians complain to you about offensive material in our press.

Namir

Doc. 293

4. As the official emblem of the Israeli first aid society (see Doc. 248, n. 2).
5. Israel ultimately supported the South Korean application.

Doc. 294

1. Not traced.

295
USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Israeli Legation in the USSR

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.3, P.2, D.10, L.3
Moscow, 2 February 1950

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics presents its compliments to the legation of the State of Israel, and in reply to the legation's note No. 2694 of 25 November 1949[1] has the honour to inform it that Soviet legislation does not envisage awarding pensions to people residing outside the borders of the USSR.

296
M. Namir to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2512/1
Moscow, 3 February 1950
Secret/By Messenger

Dear Mr. Sharett,

This is the fifth month without a commercial attaché here,[1] and for about three-quarters of a year we have made no purchases.

Chronologically, we ceased all commercial activity here from the day we formally submitted our request for commercial credit to Vyshinskii.[2] There is no sign at present that we can expect to be granted such credit in the near future. Nevertheless, it is clear to me that the total cessation of purchases is unjustified politically even if we assume that from a purely economic standpoint they are not justified. In the past we had to fight with the Ministry of Finance in each instance as well, in order to get its consent to make a purchase here, but afterwards, again in each instance, the fear of losses proved unfounded. Commercial policy *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union on an 'all or nothing' basis will not be to our advantage, just as this method has no place in political life in general.

Doc. 295

1. This document has not been traced in the files of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, Mordecai Namir mentions in his memoirs that the Israeli legation transmitted to the Soviet government an Israeli citizen's request to receive a pension on the grounds that his son, who had served in the Red Army during World War II, had fallen in battle and been decorated with the highest Soviet medal of honor – Hero of the Soviet Union. According to Namir, the reply was received on 2 February 1950 (*Shlihut beMoskva,* p. 154).

Doc. 296

1. Moshe Bejerano, the commercial attaché in Moscow, had returned to Israel in September 1949.
2. See Doc. 239.

I use the term 'purchases' without touching on the possibilities for the export of our goods to the Soviet Union, because in my opinion we should resume our purchases here, for the time being, even without reciprocity. Our political situation does not exempt us from making certain 'investments' even if they do not entail immediate profit.

I do not know where and how the questions of commerce with Russia were clarified. However, if my conjecture is correct that this question was considered without giving full weight to its political implications, then the clarification was misleading and its conclusions were misleading as well.

It should be noted that since the departure of Mr. Bejerano, there has not been a single initiative from Israel to attempt a commercial transaction of any sort. Russia's foreign trade can and will get along without us. We may regret it, but we can not alter it, any more than we can do away with our need to solicit Russian support on one issue or another. Zero in the USSR item of our trade balance will not strengthen us.

In fact, what I am asking is that the chapter of searching [for a new attaché] come to an end and that a candidate be found who will also be suitable for the position of legation counsellor. In our conversation in Paris (and in Israel with Messrs. Eytan, Eliashiv, and Radai) I said that the two positions could be combined and that this was also the view of Mr. Levavi, who by the way is interested in returning to his previous job or to a similar post in the Foreign Ministry.

I want to reiterate the point I made in previous dispatches, that the commercial appointment does not necessarily require a businessman. It would be better if [the person] had legal training or was experienced in legal formulation (drawing up contracts, etc.). Of course, all is conditional upon compatibility with the general political tenor here.

With respect and regards, yours,

M. Namir

297
Meeting: I.B. Konzhukov – A. Levavi (Moscow, 3 February 1950)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.021, OP 4, P.5, D.120, L.1
Secret

At 15.00 today I received Levavi at his request. He told me that the legation was receiving many letters from people living in Israel, who asked to be sent certificates signed by persons to whom they had been married. These certificates would express the latter's agreement to divorce.[1] Levavi asked how he should proceed in such cases. However, Levavi could not cite a single specific

1. Under Jewish law, a woman who is unable to obtain a bill of divorce (*get*) from her husband or who cannot prove that her husband is deceased, is classified as an *aguna* and cannot remarry.

case, and he did not know what sort of marriage was referred to in these letters, nor of what state these people were citizens. He promised to look into this.

Levavi added that some of the authors of these letters said that they had lost Soviet citizenship on account of their prolonged residence outside the USSR. I commented in this regard that although I knew of no specific cases, Soviet legislation on citizenship did not stipulate automatic revoking of Soviet citizenship, and that such a step would have to be registered in a manner established by law.

Levavi expressed a desire to discuss these questions with me in the near future. I agreed.

The conversation lasted ten minutes.

Konzhukov

298
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.24, P.52, D.332, L.44
Tel Aviv, 9 February 1950

According to Riftin's report, Sharett gave the following answers to questions posed by the representatives of Mapam at the session of the inter-party subcommittee on foreign affairs:[1]

1) Israel will take part in the UN's 'Little Assembly'[2] and thus far sees no grounds to vote against its decisions. The USSR is mistaken to think that the existence of the Little Assembly contradicts the UN Charter or that it is a substitute for the Security Council.

2) Israel will support the organization of a United Nations armed force, providing its character is solely that of a police force, that its size is limited, and that it is created for the maintenance of order.

1. The minutes of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, preserved in the ISA, do not contain the discussion mentioned in the text.
2. Reference is to the Interim Committee of the UN General Assembly, established in response to the US proposal of 13 November 1947 to act between the regular sessions of the General Assembly. Its functions included investigation and study of facts arising in connection with the maintenance of international peace and security. The delegations of the USSR, the Ukrainian and Belorussian SSRs, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, who saw the decision as an attempt to circumvent the Security Council and considered it a violation of the UN Charter, declared that they would not participate in the activities of the Interim Committee.

3) Israel supports the USSR's proposal for arms reduction.[3] On issues such as the banning of atomic weapons and a pact to secure peace, Israel will refrain from taking any definite position.

4) On Israel's policy towards the Bonn government, Sharett said that, in principle, it should not be recognized, but since Israel had enormous property interests in West Germany, about which it would be necessary to negotiate directly, it stood to reason that this would dictate recognition of the Bonn government.

5) Concerning the position of the Histadrut, since the majority in it is held by Mapai, Sharett answered that in connection with the World Federation of Trade Unions and the schismatic union, the Histadrut would not join the new schismatic union of trade unions, but it was also possible that it would leave the World Federation of Trade Unions.[4]

Ershov

299
M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/3235/4
Moscow, 10 February 1950

Pursuant to our 360.[1]

(a) We have put out feelers and have not, repeat not, found confirmation of a total deportation of Jews from the Moscow area and other locales, but there is full confirmation of many individual deportations on the grounds of Zionism, sympathy for Israel, requesting permission to immigrate to Israel, ties to relatives abroad, profiteering, and affiliation with anti-social elements, including transgressions in the distant past. It is impossible to estimate the range of those affected. In a few places large numbers have been declared offenders – true and imagined, Jews only – and deported. We must conjecture that this is the main source of the rumours about the deportation of entire communities of Jews in various regions. By the way, according to reliable Jewish sources, it emerges that many Jews, in the Ukraine especially, are involved

Doc. 298

3. In mid-September 1949, shortly after the explosion of its first nuclear device, the USSR proposed at the UN an immediate reduction of armaments by the Big Five on a percentage basis, an unconditional ban on atomic weapons, rigid international control, and a Big Five non-aggression pact.
4. See Doc. 258 and n. 1 there.

Doc. 299

1. Namir's telegram to Eliashiv, requesting that reports on the expulsion of Jews from the Moscow area be suppressed until confirmation was received from other sources (23 Dec. 1949, ISA 130.09/2325/4).

in the black market, are becoming rich, and behaving wastefully and profligately, and arousing the envy and wrath of the gentiles.

(b) Jews are increasingly being thrown out of work, especially from administrative positions, without cause or on inane pretexts, and the purge of cosmopolitans, who among the general public are held exclusively to be Jews, also continues, [and] antisemitism is on the rise. The atmosphere is tense. The central government does nothing to prevent this. Here and there local authorities abet [the phenomenon] openly or covertly, and they also decide which offenders will be deported. The Jews are in dire fear of dismissal, deportation and confiscation of property. A Jewish artisan who lived near the legation was quick to liquidate his workshop and his flat, moving elsewhere for fear he would be deported and his property confiscated, and now a Russian is there in his place. Sometimes one gets the impression that the authorities want to generate fear of this kind, and the fabricated story about the removal of Golda [Meyerson] from her post because of [her] propaganda activity for *aliya* and Zionism, which reached us from many sources and [reached] Barnea in Odessa, also apparently serves the same purpose and [serves] to diminish the legation's prestige in the eyes of the Jews.

(c) From the point of view of political loyalty we can discern the following division of Soviet peoples in the eyes of the government: First, the Slavs, and the Great Russians at their head, are the regime's firm basis. Second, the Mongols and the primitive tribes – they are close to the above. Third, the extensive Muslim regions – their loyalty may be put to the test, and therefore tremendous efforts are being invested to develop their economy and culture, to enhance their national self-esteem [and] to emphasize their specific national uniqueness and historic ties with Russia, as opposed to what differentiates and sets them apart from the Islamic peoples abroad. A similar policy [is followed] with regard to the Karelo-Finns. Fourth, Jews, Greeks, Turks and to some extent the Armenians – are definitely suspect. The most suspect [are] the Jews. I explained the reasons in my previous reports,[2] and if the Jews are persecuted less than the Greeks and their like it is because the problem is more complicated in scope and essence, and it is difficult to resolve it through straightforward administrative means.

(d) Special attention should be paid to a few sentences in an article on nationalism in the latest issue of *Voprosy ekonomiki*. The author quotes Stalin and interprets him thus: 'The identifying marks of a nation are a common language, territory, economy and culture. Yet, it is enough for even one of these factors to be missing for the nation not to be considered a nation. Every people has a beginning, and its existence has an end; only the Bundists and the other opportunists have promoted a degenerate concept of freedom for peoples who are not tied to their land.'

Namir

2. See Docs. 271, 275.

300
Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the USSR Legation in Israel[1]

COPY: ISA 130.09/2507/12
Tel Aviv, 22 February 1950

1) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs respectfully brings to the attention of the Soviet legation, that the law cited in the note mentioned above (The Law on National Defence Service) applies to all residents of the State of Israel of certain age brackets, without distinction of nationality, on the assumption that the immigrants from the various countries who have come to Israel have done so in order to settle permanently. Consequently, these persons enjoy all the rights designed to facilitate their settlement such as rights to housing, work and social welfare. At the same time, these persons are subject to the duties towards the state which fall upon them – including its defence. It follows that the exemption of persons who have come to this country in order to settle from those duties which are incumbent upon them, is contrary to the principle of full integration into the life of the state which is the obligation of every immigrant without regard to his country of origin, and it would follow that the rights and privileges accorded to persons who fulfill their duty towards the state can not be made available to those who demand such an exemption.

2) The ministry has likewise examined the problem in question from the point of view of international law and has reached the conclusion that, given the fact that in numerous countries similar laws are in force, according to which foreign nationals are subjected to military service, there is no contradiction between the Law of National Defence Service, mentioned above, and international law.

3) Whereas the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would be unable to accept the point of view expressed in the note of the Soviet legation, it would be ready, nonetheless, in exceptional cases and without establishing any precedents, to consider each request individually. These applications should be presented and recommended by the legation, in cases where the persons in question formally declare that they are requesting an exemption from military service because they are returning to their country of origin.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs takes this opportunity to reiterate to the Soviet legation assurances of its highest esteem.

1. This document is a reply to Doc. 291.

301
Sh. Eliashiv to M. Namir (Moscow)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2514/1
Tel Aviv, 28 February 1950

Shalom Namir,

I have already noted in a previous letter[1] that recently our connections with the Soviet legation have been waning. There are two reasons for this:

(a) Every so often, in addition to meetings at my initiative, official conversations and chance meetings at various receptions, I used to encounter them at activities organized by the friendship league. On every occasion such a meeting would give rise to a conversation. Now I have ceased to attend those functions. In the meantime, there were the celebrations of 7 November, Memorial Day for Lenin and Red Army Day. Legation staff and the minister himself appear there, but meet and converse only with others.

(b) The foreign minister [Sharett], too, has not held conversations with the minister for some time, in fact, not since he returned from Lake Success. Previously he used to invite him quite frequently and supply up-to-date information, some of it on sensitive subjects. The cardinal issue currently preoccupying the Foreign Ministry concerns our tactics on the Jerusalem question, and with it, the Abdallah affair. Neither subject can be discussed under current circumstances. Several times we considered whether we should inform him about the situation in the negotiations with Abdallah. B[en]-G[urion] took a negative view.

I think that in the coming days, perhaps already this week, when negotiations reach a certain point, it will be possible to call him in and tell him about it.[2] I have already spoken about this with M[oshe] S[harett]. Their reaction to this subject should be determined in advance, even if it does not find expression [in the] remarks of the minister here. If you also get the opportunity to talk about it you should remind them that they always spoke against the Conciliation Commission and against mediators, and advocated direct negotiations between us and the Arab states. It can be pointed out that this agreement is not yet a peace treaty, that it is only one step towards a permanent peace settlement, and that it does not take the place of the armistice agreement that was concluded in the framework of the UN.

Regards,

Sh. Eliashiv

---

1. Of 11 November 1949, filed under ISA 130.11/2514/1.
2. Sharett met the Soviet minister on 3 March and reported to him on the negotiations with Jordan (see Doc. 303).

302
M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/3235/4
Moscow, 2 March 1950

Pursuant to our open 1019.

(a) Yesterday Levavi visited the deputy director of the Near East Department Shchiborin and levelled detailed and reasoned criticism against the reports in the press: all the reports from Tel Aviv are negative and distort our situation. Our government values Soviet public opinion and we find the distortion of our true image distressing. The negative, one-sided descriptions are completely without foundation and may also affect the analysis and correct perception here of the problems in the Middle East. He concentrated primarily on analyzing Lutskii's article in *Voprosy ekonomiki* and an article in *New Times*.[1] Shchiborin did not try to refute our claims, but argued that the anti-Soviet criticism in our press is far more acute and that there is also slander of personalities such as Ershov and Fedorin. He did not elaborate on the nature of this slander. Levavi replied that the serious, mainstream press did not hide the positive elements of life in the Soviet Union, and generally displayed understanding and sympathy. As for the criticism and attacks, they did not spare others as well, including our own cabinet ministers, and in any event there was no basis for the claim that our press collected only what was negative and defective, as TASS did in Tel Aviv. In cases of especially serious personal attacks, our Foreign Ministry will certainly not refuse to take up the matter within the limits of its possibilities. Shchiborin took note and will convey. A certain coolness could be sensed in his comments. Full report in the diplomatic pouch.[2]

(b) The article by Zviagin appeared after the conversation and did not mention us.[3] If there is no change for the better, I will also broach the subject in a meeting with Maksimov.

(c) Recently, there have also been attacks in the press against antisemitism in America, and the increased vilification of Israel may be directed primarily towards domestic consumption, in order to denigrate it in the eyes of local Jews.

Namir

---

1. Reference is to the paper presented by V.B. Lutskii (Moscow State University) at a conference held by the Institute of Economics and the Institute of Pacific Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences in June 1949. A report on the conference, published in *Voprosy ekonomiki* 10 (1949), pp. 74–93, included a review of Lutskii's paper given there (pp. 84–7). The review is reprinted in Ro'i, *From Encroachment to Involvement*, pp. 71–8. For I. Tishin's article, 'Peoples of the Middle East Fight for Peace', see *New Times*, 22 Feb. 1950.
2. Levavi's report, dated 1 March 1950, is filed under ISA 130.11/2503/12.
3. Zviagin's article also appeared in *New Times*. Its main theme was the imperialistic rivalry between Britain and the US in the Middle East. Israel was referred to in connection with the loan from the Export-Import Bank and with Morgenthau's visit (see telegram from the Israeli legation to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1 March 1950, ISA 130.11/2503/12).

303
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett (Tel Aviv, 3 March 1950)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.24, P.52. D.332, LL 62–5

On 3 March I paid a call on Sharett at his invitation. He informed me about the results of the negotiations between Israel and Transjordan.[1] Sharett began by saying that the starting point of these negotiations was the fact that, in spite of the conclusion of the cease-fire agreements, which did no more than stabilize the military situation, Israel continued to be isolated from the Arab countries. What Israel needed was a long period of calm in the region, in order to work successfully to build up the state. Israel had 180,000 Arabs, whom it did not want to see turning into a fifth column, especially when its frontiers were extremely overextended. These were the reasons why Israel was trying by every means to strengthen its relations with the Arab countries. But for this it was necessary to make a breach in the Arab world, and to reach an agreement with one Arab country. It would be desirable for Israel to make peace first with Egypt, since it was the most stable of all the Arab countries. But a new government had just come to power there,[2] and its attitude to Israel was still unknown.

The weakest link in the chain of Arab countries, Sharett went on, was Transjordan, which wanted to secure its hold on the Arab part of Palestine. Israel was not happy about this, and would have preferred to have a new democratic state on its borders, but since there were no political forces capable of organizing a new state on this territory, and since it had no intention of going to war for this new state, Israel would have to put up with the existing situation.

The negotiations with Transjordan have been going on for a long time, but only in the past few days has there been any possibility of concluding a non-aggression pact. This is not a peace treaty, but a step towards it. On the other hand, it does not oblige Israel to recognize the annexation of the Arab part of Palestine, although it does forbid the use of this territory by the troops of other countries. If such a treaty were concluded (I am adhering to Sharett's style), it would give Israel a number of advantages:

1) It would make a breach in the Arab camp, which would be enormously important for propaganda and morale.

---

1. Negotiations between Israel and Jordan began in November 1949 and continued through the end of February 1950. In the course of these negotiations, the draft of a peace treaty was agreed upon and initialed by both parties. The Jordanians, however, had second thoughts and suggested a five-year non-aggression agreement instead. Israel declined this proposal and negotiations were suspended (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 5, No. 112, pp. 146–53).
2. A new Egyptian government headed by the veteran Wafd leader Mustafa Nahhas was sworn in on 12 January 1950, following a general election which had resulted in a landslide victory for the Wafd nationalist party.

2) It would be concluded without UN mediation, by means of direct negotiations, and would be a precedent for other Arab countries.

3) The treaty would mean even more if it provided for the renewal of economic relations.

4) It would say nothing about the return of Arab refugees, since Transjordan has not raised this question, but Israel would have to pay compensation for the losses borne by the refugees.

5) The treaty would also provide for access to Mount Scopus, the opening of the old Jerusalem road through Latrun and a number of other small mutual concessions. It is possible that the trade agreement would allocate a 'free zone' in Haifa to Transjordan and that the question of renewing the work of the Dead Sea potash factories would be coordinated.

The treaty would formalize Israel's current frontiers, including the Negev. If this conversation had taken place yesterday, Sharett might have said that the treaty would be signed in two or three days. But today we heard of the resignation of the Transjordanian government. It follows that this is a demonstration against the treaty, but it seems likely that Abdallah will form a government which will not stop him from reaching agreement with Israel. Sharett added that at the present moment he was interested to see what position Britain would adopt. Hitherto, Sharett concluded, Britain had played a waiting game, neither intervening in the negotiations nor putting any pressure on Transjordan.

Making use of Sharett's visit, I handed him the note of the legation according to your instructions.[3] The contents of the note made a great impression on Sharett and on Eliashiv, who was present at the conversation. Sharett said that he would do everything possible to 'reach a mutual agreement and to end the state of conflict on this matter'. He asked about the practical significance of this question for us, and I answered that it was significant both in principle and in practice. Eliashiv tried to begin a discussion on the civil rights of people who refused to serve in the Israeli army, but I interrupted him and said that his point of view had already been expressed in the note of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 22 February, to which a full answer had been given in the note of the legation of 3 March. In conclusion Sharett repeated that he would do everything possible and that the note of the legation would receive due consideration.[4]

Ershov

---

3. On 27 February 1950 Ershov reported to Moscow that 18 Soviet citizens had asked the USSR legation for exemption from the Israeli draft. Nine of them, who had expressed a desire to return to the USSR, were considered entitled to exemption from the draft according to the Israeli note of 22 February 1950 (AVP RF, f.059, op.24, p.52, d.332, l.57; see Docs. 291, 300).

   On 1 March 1950 Vyshinskii instructed Ershov to transmit to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs a note prepared in Moscow regarding the conscription of Soviet citizens. The text dealt with the draft of foreigners into local armies from the perspective of international law, and saw Israeli practice as a violation of such law (see AVP RF f.059, op.24, p.27, d.154, l.30).

4. On the Israeli reply to the Soviet note, see Doc. 311, n. 3.

304
M. Sharett to Y. Barnea (Moscow)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2383/29
Tel Aviv, 6 March 1950

Dear Yisrael,

My heartfelt thanks for your letter.[1] I had been hoping to receive a direct message from you since you arrived at your post, and when it finally came I received it without anger at the tardiness but rather with great delight.

However, my delight faded when I read what you had to say. Although I assumed that you would not find yourself swept up in intensive, arduous work upon your arrival in Moscow, I did not imagine that you would feel yourself in such a complete vacuum. Nevertheless, you must accept the situation and bear the torments of your relative idleness lovingly. A state works according to its own logic. When it is decidedly in the interests of the state to undertake a certain action or make a particular arrangement – so it is decreed and no argument to the contrary will avail; and definitely not one based on an individual's aesthetic sensibilities – however justified they might be.

Even if we had known clearly in advance the extent of your enforced idleness, rest assured that we would not have changed our decision. So thin is the fabric of our relations with your superpower that we would not at this time consider severing any of the meagre threads that bind us to it. Perhaps you do not sense acutely, in your day-to-day life, the importance of your mission, but I have no doubt that eliminating it today would have an impact on the state of relations. It is not impossible that we will reach a stage in which we will have to make a decision about whether to go on maintaining this post or cancelling it. As of now, we have not reached that stage.

I would hope that my efforts at explaining the situation and my considerations come as nothing new to a veteran soldier and experienced officer like yourself. You know better than I do how the military machine works and how the dictates of manpower specifications may remove a person from the nerve centre and transfer him to some remote corner without any visible signs of life. The justification for such transfers is the maintenance and smooth functioning of the system as a whole, in all its branches.

It might be construed from my remarks that I also agree that you should be seen as a victim and that my only aim is to preach patience so that you can bear your bitter fate. However, this is not the case. What you say in your letter is sincere and to the point, yet I still doubt whether you regret having assumed the mission. All your previous experience undoubtedly gives you much food for thought. Observation of that country from the inside with the corresponding perspective of the outside world undoubtedly adds significant assets to

1. Doc. 289.

one's intellectual property and leaves something that will be of benefit later in life. All the more so if that experience is acquired not by satisfying personal wishes but in the service of the public and in its name.

We were delighted by the news that you managed to see your parents[-in-law]. We imagined how excited and thrilled Shoshana must have been, and we were thrilled from afar together with her.[2] I haven't had an opportunity to see your Rachel since you left, but I hope to look in on her soon during my visit to Haifa. I hear that all is well with her.

When Shoshana comes we will undoubtedly hear interesting stories from her. Not that I am pressuring her, heaven forbid, because the longer she stays in Moscow the better it will be for you and the legation, but whenever she does come we will welcome her with open arms.

Be well and be strong,

305
M. Sharett to M. Namir (Moscow)

LETTER: ISA 130.11/2514/1
Tel Aviv, 8 March 1950
Secret

Dear Namir,

I have wronged you by not writing you all these months since my return from New York.

You undoubtedly know that I did not succeed in meeting with Vyshinskii, which at the time caused me deep disappointment. Initially the interview was promised, but I was told that I would have to wait until the conclusion of a certain dispute that was preoccupying him completely. We mentioned the promise to Tsarapkin several times, and in each instance he reiterated that the interview would take place, but we must wait a little more. My impression was that they thought the main reason for my coming to them was to complain about their position on the Jerusalem question and that they wanted to avoid this unpleasant clash. Since I had no intention of focusing the conversation on that issue – on the contrary, I was afraid that Jerusalem, which was then the 'burning' issue, would get in the way of my attempt to broach the main topic which I had intended to raise in the conversation – I decided not to push them and to be patient until after the vote on internationalization.

My assumption was that like last year, Vyshinskii would remain until the end of the session (the previous year, in Paris, I had held my principal

2. In a personal interview with Yaacov Ro'i which took place on 17 March 1968, Barnea recounted a dramatic reunion in Odessa between his wife Shoshana and her parents, whom she had not seen for almost 30 years.

conversation with him the day after the session ended). But suddenly he got up and left. When I reminded Tsarapkin of his promise, he apologized and claimed that Vyshinskii's departure had been advanced unexpectedly by a full week and that he had been forced to cancel a number of obligations. I told Tsarapkin that I was extremely disappointed, since for me this was a rare opportunity. I asked him to convey to Moscow my regret that the conversation had not taken place, and he promised that he would do so.

Thus the main point in my Soviet plan failed – it was connected with my presence at the [General] Assembly. As for the second point,[1] I held a special meeting with the participation of Haim Greenberg, the brothers Jacob and Nehemiah Robinson, and Marie Syrkin.[2] The poem made a tremendous impression – one of the men shed a tear. I also read them the original poem of M[argarita] A[liger]. The majority held your view rather than mine, namely that the original poem that reached you in manuscript form was not by the same author, but a new variation woven into the same theme together with whole sections of the old design.[3] Marie in particular insisted that this could be the only possible source of the poem. She proved definitively that the new poem contained lines which could not possibly have been written by such a gifted lyric poet with such an intense poetic thrust as M[argarita] A[liger], which can be seen by the poem that is printed in that journal.[4] At the same time, everyone agreed that the tragic significance of the poem and its political importance were not affected in the least by its dubious origins.

Marie S. agreed to translate the poem and have it published with an appropriate note. I still do not know whether she was successful in this endeavour. I have now cabled New York to ask what became of it.[5]

In the meantime, your latest report arrived and generated a new wave of profound anxiety concerning the situation of Soviet Jewry and what is about to befall it. We are at a complete loss and are helpless in the face of this fateful decree. Right now we have had the good fortune of a great deliverance for a Jewish community which had also seemed destined to be completely severed from the body of the nation and was quivering helplessly in the grip of a repressive regime. I refer to the decision by the government of Iraq to permit Jews to immigrate to Israel. This surprising turn of events was achieved thanks

1. Reference is to the underground poem received from the USSR (see Doc. 273).
2. The group whom Sharett asked for advice included the director of the Culture and Education Department of the World Zionist Organization and editor of the New York monthly *Jewish Frontier*, Haim Greenberg; the journal's managing editor, writer and translator Marie Syrkin; the legal advisor for the Israeli Mission to the UN, Jacob Robinson, and his brother Nehemiah Robinson, legal consultant to the World Jewish Congress.
3. When in 1969 Aleksandr Donat asked Aliger whether she was the author of this piece, the latter denied having any connection to it (see Donat, *Neopalimaia Kupina*, p. 415, and Averbukh, 'Jewish Samizdat', pp. 84 and 87).
4. Reference is to the text of Aliger's poem 'Your Victory' published in the Soviet literary monthly *Znamia* in September 1945. Stanza 18 served as the basis for the underground poem.
5. No English translation of the poem has been traced by the editors. Hebrew translations appeared in 1957 and 1971.

to our persistent efforts. We were able to penetrate deep within a land of dark fanaticism and evil despotism, to maintain a living link, to act and to activate others. In the Soviet Union we can only watch and record, and even that is fragmented and incomplete.

Every so often the idea is raised of going to Moscow in order to reach the top rung of the ladder. But grave doubts continue to militate against that idea: Will we be allowed to come? And if so, will the effort bear fruit? Or will it fail so that we lose more than we gain? And in the meantime, who can say what price we will pay for this bold effort in other parts of the international arena? Such are the thoughts that weigh upon our deliberations and curb our initiative.

I am sorry to conclude my letter on such a gloomy note, but the tragedy of Soviet Jewry is darkening my spirits without end and casting a shadow over all our lives.

Yours,

Moshe Sharett

306
Excerpts from the Political Report of the USSR Legation in Israel

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.3, P.6, D.8, LL.211–26; 262–4
Tel Aviv, 10 March 1950
Secret

REPORT OF THE USSR MISSION IN THE STATE OF ISRAEL
FOR THE PERIOD FROM THE FORMATION OF THE STATE
IN MAY 1948 TO DECEMBER 1949

[...][1]

Israel's Policy towards the USSR and the People's Democracies

The Soviet Union's position on the Palestine question at the UN played a decisive role in the creation of the State of Israel. The official recognition of Israel on the third day of its existence, the establishment of normal diplomatic relations followed by the arrival of the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv (the first foreign diplomatic mission) aroused general approval and increased friendly feelings among Israeli workers. The numerous rallies and meetings held in the towns and agricultural settlements on Soviet holidays marking the anniversary of the revolution are a demonstration of the friendly attitude of Israel's workers towards the Soviet Union. A particularly striking example of gratitude to the USSR and the Soviet government was the celebration by Israeli workers of the

1. The extracts comprise pages 211–26 and the final three pages of a 264-page report.

70th birthday of Comrade Stalin, when throughout the country, in all the big towns and many agricultural settlements, there were mass rallies and ceremonial gatherings in honour of Stalin, the leader of all progressive mankind.

It is quite obvious that in its policy towards the USSR, the Israeli government can not underestimate or fail to reckon with these sympathies among its people. In one of his first conversations with us, Foreign Minister Sharett was obliged to recognize that 'the Jews' sympathy for the USSR had grown stronger, and they had understood that in their aspirations to create a national state, they would not lack support from the Soviet Union. The Soviet recognition of Israel justified this hope and was received with great joy and enthusiasm, as a fact of enormous historical significance.'

Moreover, since the government of Israel is interested in further support from the Soviet Union, both in the United Nations and outside it, the government of Israel refrains from making official and public statements against the Soviet Union, even when Soviet policy does not correspond to the aims of Israel's ruling circles, as was the case, for instance, with respect to Jerusalem.

Nevertheless, the government of Israel can not hide its negative attitude to the USSR and the People's Democracies. However much it takes cover behind its supposedly 'independent policy', no declarations or statements by the leaders of Mapai, the ruling so-called 'workers' party, can conceal the government's pro-American alignment.

From the beginning of the USSR legation's stay in Israel, the Israeli government authorities displayed their 'neutrality'. One thing which aroused indignation among the public at large was the 'incident at the opera' on 21 August 1948,[2] when by order of the director of the Protocol Division of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the American and Israeli national anthems were sung, but not the state hymn of the Soviet Union, although the representatives of the Soviet legation were in the theatre together with those of the US. The newspaper *Kol haam* wrote in this regard that

> the anti-Soviet provocation which took place at the opera on 21 August has evoked a great wave of protest throughout the country. Reports from towns and

2. US Ambassador to Israel James McDonald describes the incident in his memoirs (*My Mission to Israel*, p. 35), as follows:

> Within a fortnight occurred the first 'diplomatic incident' involving the Russians and ourselves. At the opening performance of the Israel National Opera, both missions were guests of the prima donna, Mme. Edis de Phillipe. We were all seated in the center of the front row of the balcony in the famous Habima Theater in Tel Aviv. Ershov was represented by his counselor, Mikhail L. Mukhin – we later grew to know the latter as the 'strong man' of the delegation – and by other members of his staff. Bobby and I headed our group. Before the overture to *Manon* the orchestra played the 'Hatikva', the Israeli national anthem and then the 'Star-Spangled Banner', but not the 'Internationale'. At the first intermission the Russians stalked out, refusing to be reconciled by the plea of Dr. Michael Simon, Israel's chief of protocol, that no discrimination was intended, and that the Soviet anthem, would have been played had the chief of the mission been present. The explanation was rejected. After a day or two of much bother and more formal explanations delivered in person by Dr. Simon to Ershov, the incident was formally declared closed.

villages and from soldiers at the front testify to the general sense of bitterness and indignation over the insulting behaviour of our foreign policy leaders towards the representatives of the country, thanks to which, the State of Israel was founded.

According to the newspaper *Al hamishmar*, 'forbidding the singing of the Soviet hymn was a crude mistake and tactless act towards the state which was the first to send us a full complement of diplomatic representatives at a time when the representative of the US was no more than a "special representative" of a state which had still to recognize us *de jure*'. Even a paper such as *Hamashkif* responded to the government newspapers' attempts to dismiss the incident as no more than 'a matter of protocol' with a *feuilleton* in which it wrote that 'its essence is that our diplomatic overture has begun. And a refrain on the theme of "East and West" is already reaching our ears.'

Barely a month after the incident at the opera, the official newspaper *Davar* considered it necessary to publicize that 'the so-called Palestinian Council Magen,[3] which is a society for assisting Zionists detained in Soviet Russia, met in Tel Aviv in order to discuss the situation of arrested Zionists and to consider demands for their liberation and emigration to Israel'.

The pro-Western alignment of the government party Mapai, combined with the nationalism of the left-wing workers' party Mapam (which reflects Zionist ideology), quite often draws them together with every existing reactionary force. This 'spiritual unity' comes to the fore of political life whenever the subject of Zionism is broached. The reaction in Israel to the well-known article by Il'ia Erenburg, published in *Pravda* on 21 September 1948,[4] to Genin's brochure[5] and to Lutskii's article in the journal *Voprosy ekonomiki*[6] is characteristic. The newspaper *Maariv* reported that 'Israeli circles were very nervous about the publication of Erenburg's article in *Pravda* and on the radio... It is not clear to us why Russia had to withdraw its support for the State of Israel.' According to the *Palestine Post,* 'sympathy for the State of Israel and antipathy towards Zionism are, one might think, two feelings which are hardly compatible'. Mapam issued a special publication entitled 'Notes in the Margin of Genin's Brochure',[7] in which it rejected Genin's views, while the Mapam Party paper *Al hamishmar* went so far as to say that 'without the State of Israel and its Jewish workers, the victory of progressive forces in the world will not lead to any possibility of a normal Jewish national life. What it will do is to create conditions in which people will no long murder Jews.' The paper *Hamashkif* stated that 'the State of Israel can not be separated from Zionism, and that 'our aim is that... Jewish children, citizens of the USSR, should study Hebrew, and that Jews should be able to join the camp of those who are

3. On the Magen Society see Doc. 13.
4. See Doc. 168.
5. See Doc. 217 and n. 1 there.
6. See Doc. 302, n. 1.
7. Reference is the mimeographed brochure entitled, *In the Margin of the Pamphlet: 'The Palestine Problem'*, by L. Levite.

building their state, i.e., to migrate to Palestine'. In the opinion of the paper *Davar*, 'the struggle against cosmopolitanism constitutes the liquidation of Jewish culture'.

This is to quote only a few examples of Israeli press reaction, examples which can be regarded in some way as political debate, while other press statements are anti-Soviet and are based on slander, fabrications and crude attacks on the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies.

One other fact stands out, and that is the biased selection of the staff of the Israeli legation in Moscow. Although Mapam was represented in the government and took part, according to the party's strength, in all of the official and public institutions, on this occasion its participation was categorically rejected on the grounds of the party's 'pro-Soviet orientation'. One Mapai representative, L. Shkolnik, opening a meeting of the Tel Aviv section of the Histadrut to send off the Israeli legation to Moscow, wished them *bon voyage* with the following words:

> The Soviet Union's reappraisal of Zionism is one of the decisive events in the recent history of our people... We send them on their way with some misgivings. They will undoubtedly represent Israel without bowing their heads, as befits the heroic history of our people and our working class. We know that our interests are in safe hands and that we have chosen true defenders of our cause in the USSR.

The Histadrut members from Mapam invited to the send-off did not come to the meeting, but explained their behaviour in an open letter, in which they said that they had refused to come to the meeting because of 'the shameful selection of personnel to represent Israel in the USSR'. The letter went on to say that 'the thirst for individual personal power in the party' had led to 'one-party seizure of power in the staff of the legation', which ultimately undermined unity in the workers' movement and did not serve the aim of mutual understanding and better representation.

Subsequent appointments to the Israeli legation in Moscow, and in particular the replacement of Golda Meyerson by Namir, did not, by any means, signal that Israel intended to give its legation in Moscow serious appointments that would further the development of mutual relations between the two countries. Namir's appointment, inasmuch as it did not raise the standing of the Israeli legation, forced Sharett to repeatedly boost Namir's image, and, in particular, to assert that 'the desire to appoint Namir as minister to the USSR should not be viewed as diminishing the significance attached to the legation', and, in addition, 'that he was very unwilling to remove from Moscow a diplomat who understood our general tasks and interests so well'. The appointment of Col. Barnea as military attaché was received with bewilderment in the Israeli army command since Barnea's military reputation was that of a very ordinary man who had joined the Mapai Party to further his career. We can therefore conclude that the special selection of the higher ranks and staff of the Israeli legation in Moscow had just one important purpose –

to accomplish tasks which serve only Mapai's goals, and in no way promote those mutual relations favoured by the progressive groups in the population.

As we have already said, the Soviet Union's steadfast foreign policy, the Soviet delegation's statements at the UN Assembly and in the Security Council on the Palestine question, the Soviet Union's recognition of the State of Israel at the most difficult moment of its formation, the arrival of the USSR legation in Israel – all this evoked an enormous surge of sympathy towards the land of socialism among the Israeli masses and serves as a firm basis for the growth and development of progressive forces. The most striking example of this is the activity of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR. This league emerged from the V League, which had almost ceased to exist, and although this was a difficult period of intra-party friction, grew fairly quickly into a serious organization with about 20,000 members. The league's efforts to increase sympathy towards the Soviet Union at first aroused sullen displeasure in government circles and attacks in the reactionary press. Later on, Mapai decided to leave the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR. This was undoubtedly done with the single aim of intimidating progressive elements and impairing the work of the league in order to reduce the scope and significance of its activities. In order to conceal the anti-Soviet position so plainly evident in this action from the public, Mapai resorted to accusing the league of engaging in a party struggle, thereby abandoning the country's 'neutral' policy. On leaving the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR, Mapai set up, for the sake of appearances, a Committee for Friendly Relations which, using its fine-sounding name and camouflaged by supposedly academic activities, was given the task, in reality, of putting a stop to work among the broad masses.[8]

It should be noted that in the course of pursuing this 'neutral' policy, Mapai – on this occasion in cooperation with the pro-fascist Herut Party – founded a league for strengthening relations between the US and Israel. With the help of its American 'friends', this organization is now one of the sources of anti-Soviet propaganda.

The efforts, stemming from Israeli ruling circles, to weaken the activity of progressive forces are not confined to attacks on the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR. Israeli firms which deal with the sale of Soviet literature and printed works from the People's Democracies run into organized (if covert) obstacles.[9] At first, difficulties with the import of Soviet books were explained by the lack of foreign currency for that purpose. Now, with the agreement of our trading and financial organizations that literature received from the USSR can be paid for in local currency, new complications have arisen in the form of various hindrances such as censorship and customs. The

8. The Hebrew name of the organization was Haaguda Liydidut Yisrael–Brit Hamoatsot (The Israel–USSR Friendship Society). In the Russian documents the organization is sometimes referred to as a society *(obshchestvo)* and sometimes as a committee *(komitet)*.
9. See Doc. 191.

fear of everything Soviet has reached the point at which local stamp collectors are unable to obtain Soviet postage stamps. It should be emphasized that bookshops and newspaper stalls everywhere in Israel have a wide selection of literature and periodicals published abroad, including those with an anti-Soviet outlook.

The conduct of widespread anti-Soviet propaganda in the press occupies a special place in the policy of the ruling Mapai Party. In this connection, the newspapers and periodicals of the 'workers'' party do not lag behind bourgeois publications. Various sorts of fabrications and slanderous attacks on the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies are published regularly.

Anti-Soviet publications touch on every facet of the domestic life and foreign policy of the USSR and its relations with the People's Democracies. Soviet leaders are constantly attacked. Special attention is given to fabrications about the life of Jews in the Soviet Union, Romania and Hungary.

All sorts of methods, beginning with political surveys from 'our own correspondents' and ending with *feuilletons*, reviews and reports on current affairs are used to falsify and distort reality. The official and bourgeois Israeli press see all international events through the eyes of the employees of United Press and Reuters. Any anti-Soviet provocation receives wide coverage and tendentious commentaries. Events and actions which testify to Soviet achievements are hushed up or presented in a distorted manner. Even such information as the latest news in Soviet art or successes in sport does not receive proper coverage.

The Israeli government's position with regard both to the USSR and to the People's Democracies has never been straightforward or sincere in political affairs, economic relations or cultural links. Ever since the Soviet legation arrived in Israel, it has tried to settle with the Israeli government the perfectly clear question of the USSR's property interests in Israel. But the government of Israel is not demonstrating goodwill regarding the securing of the Soviet Union's property rights. On the contrary, it tries by various delaying tactics and legal complications to avoid a basic solution to the matter and also to use our interest in registering the property rights as a means to achieve their political goals. For instance, senior officials in the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs have hinted more than once at a link between the transfer of the property in Jerusalem to the USSR and the Soviet government's attitude to a future statute for the city.[10] On the other hand, local Jewish authorities who enjoy direct government protection are trying without prior arrangement to take possession of certain sites, hoping in the future to secure them for themselves.

The scale of commercial relations between Israel, on the one hand, and the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies on the other, shows that the volume of export–import operations is constantly decreasing and that Israel is not abiding by its treaty obligations to the People's Democracies. It is

---

10. See e.g., Doc. 282.

becoming clear that the Israeli government, in spite of the obvious mutual advantage, does not intend to expand its trade with democratic countries. Many Israeli firms have devoted a good deal of effort to getting customs and foreign exchange licences for purchasing goods in the USSR, but everything they do runs up against determined resistance from the government authorities. Although Comrade Lopukhin of Eksportlen' [Export–Flax] arrived in Israel to represent our trading organizations, none of his proposals got any support, although the government press tries to portray the situation as if Israel were carrying on widespread free trade with the whole world, without giving preference to any particular political orientation.

The Israeli government's 'neutrality' is also reflected in Israel's cultural links. This was demonstrated, for example, when a group of Israel's democratic youth was sent to the World Youth Festival in Budapest. The Israeli government delayed giving exit visas and travelling expenses until the last possible moment, and only under strong public pressure was prevailed upon to allow the delegation to go.[11]

The numerous visits made to Israel by Western politicians and their anti-democratic, anti-Soviet and ultimately anti-popular and anti-Israeli utterances could not escape the notice of society at large, and the progressive press often came out with criticism of the one-sided 'hospitality' of the Israeli government. In order somewhat to neutralize this overly conspicuous phenomenon; the government devised a move that the minister of foreign affairs described to us as follows:

> I must tell you frankly that circumstances in which representatives of Western states have made numerous visits to our country, a visit by Mr. Gromyko, who is the most popular person in Israel, would be particularly important for us in connection with our chosen policy of unconditional neutrality. But let us suppose that Mr. Gromyko's official workload does not allow him to come now, then a visit by someone else chosen by the Soviet government would, of course, be received with enormous enthusiasm.[12]

Sharett's 'enthusiasm', however, did not stop the mayor of Tel Aviv, Rokah, from finding a specious excuse to refuse a proposal by the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR to name a street in Tel Aviv after Andrei Gromyko, although the municipality had in the past found it appropriate to name streets in the city after such 'figures' as Balfour and General Allenby, who symbolize the essence of British colonial rule in Palestine.

There can be no doubt that both Sharett's proposal for a visit by Comrade Gromyko and the aim of the thoroughly mercenary majority of the leaders of

11. World youth festivals were organized every other year in one of the East European capitals. The first one was held in Prague in 1947. The Israeli attendance at the Budapest festival in 1949 followed a prolonged controversy in Israel. Eventually, the delegation was split into two parts, one representing the Israeli Communist Party and the other the rest of the so-called democratic youth. The Hungarian authorities gave preferential treatment to the communist section and virtually ignored the other delegation (see Sh. Bentsur to the East European Division, 15 Sept. 1949, ISA 130.11/2499/22).
12. See Docs. 250, 251.

the Histadrut to get a delegation of Soviet trade unions to Israel, was intended to repair the shaky reputation of the 'policy of unconditional neutrality', and thereby to regain some of the political advantage which had been squandered on innumerable trips to the Western hemisphere.

Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, concealing US policy from Israeli public opinion, has emphasized in his statements that, in addition to the arms embargo, there is also a 'people embargo' (here he has in mind the Soviet Union and such countries as Romania and Hungary). In this he was supported by the Mapai Party paper *Hador*, which fills its pages with attacks on communists. 'We all know', the paper wrote, 'that if it were not for the ban imposed by the communist governments of Romania and Hungary, we would be seeing a large immigration from these countries. Both communist governments are now playing the role previously played by the British government, when it shut the door on immigration to this country.'

As is well known, the Histadrut delegation at the Milan Congress of the World Federation of Trades Unions tried to bring up the question of Jewish immigration to Israel, and thus to use the authority and platform of the WFTU for attacks on the governments of the People's Democracies.[13] When no such discussion took place, the Mapai newspapers began to accuse Comrade Kuznetsov, the representative of the Soviet trade unions at the congress, of using 'special tactics' in order to frustrate 'the demands for immigration from Romania and Hungary which had been raised at the Trade Unions' International'.

The newspaper *Davar*, the official organ of the Histadrut, offered some statistics about immigration to its readers in the following fashion:

> All the signs, both manifest and concealed, suggest that the heart of the majority of Russian Jewry is inseparable from the population of Israel and from its relatives in this country, who are defenders of the historic homeland, its creators and its restorers, both for themselves and for the whole Jewish nation. And the result until now... out of over 320 thousand people who have immigrated since the day the State of Israel was founded, only four have come from the Soviet Union. How tragic and strange!... Can this really be considered Soviet support of Israel, when obstacles are placed in the way of resolving security problems.

'We shall not give up on the immigration of Jews from Russia', Ben-Gurion has repeatedly emphasized.

After the elections to the Constituent Assembly were won by Mapai, which, according to the *Palestine Post,* 'delighted both the State Department and the White House', Ben-Gurion, who was asked to form a government, said that Israel's foreign policy would be based, in particular, on 'loyalty' to the basic principles of the UN Charter and on friendship with all peace-loving states, especially the US and the USSR.

---

13. See Doc. 258 and n. 1 there.

In their speeches at various times and on various occasions, the president, prime minister and minister of foreign affairs have interpreted this principle of foreign policy in ways which, taken together with the actions of the government, can serve as sufficient basis for an assessment of Israel's foreign policy. In his speech at the session of the State Council in September 1948, President Weizmann said that the creation of the State of Israel demonstrated what 'we owe to the great work done in this country during the last thirty years', and that 'the Balfour Declaration was our first political achievement'. Speaking on the radio in May 1949, Ben-Gurion said:

> Without forgetting our devotion to and respect for the UN and those states which helped us in the General Assembly, we are satisfied by the fact that the State of Israel came into being not by a decision of the UN but thanks to the determination of the Jews and the heroism of Israel's defence forces... The State of Israel will be created by absorbing a large immigration and by building a large number of new settlements, and the state frontiers will be determined not by the strength of our army or the efforts of our diplomatic representatives, but by our creative powers.

Official policy aims at giving the mass of the people, especially the new immigrants, a distorted version of history, in order primarily to belittle the role and importance of the Soviet Union in the formation of the State of Israel, to play down the assistance received from the People's Democracies, and, on the other hand, to make much of the activity of Zionist factors, of which the most important, supposedly, is the Mapai Party headed by Ben-Gurion, which has managed to embody Zionist aspirations and aims throughout history to the present day, by creating the State of Israel as it now exists.

At the time of the Knesset debates in June–July 1949 on the government's foreign policy, which were occasioned by American pressure on Israel aimed at hindering a peaceful settlement of Arab–Israeli relations, the minister of foreign affairs, who opened the debate, could not find the right words to firmly rebuff the US attempt to interfere in Israeli affairs. In this connection, Communist MK Wilner, said of the government's pro-American policy that 'when America votes for us with the USSR, Sharett reminds us of it, but when the USSR and the countries of Eastern Europe help us without America, Sharett remains silent'. When Sharett spoke about the People's Democracies, he could not refrain from attacks on the communists and on the governments of some East European countries. Concerning the trial of Zionists in Hungary,[14] Sharett said:

> We read about the sentence pronounced in Budapest with a bitter sense of pain and outrage. This trial is one more chapter in the suffering of Jewish immigrants... The contradiction between a proclamation of friendship towards Israel and a failure to recognize its vital interests must be acknowledged. Now immigration

14. Reference is to the arrest and trial of ten Zionist activists in Hungary in May–June 1949. These people were accused of assisting illegal immigration to Israel and seven of them were sentenced to varying prison terms.

> has been maligned as helping imperialism... But for us, actions which hinder immigration are a denial of the Jews' right to life and equality. The suppression of Zionism means the deprivation of the right to national existence.

And further: 'If Israel had the sort of democracy professed by the communists, Mr. Wilner and his friends would not be serving in the Knesset, but somewhere else.'

The entire reactionary press, including the left opposition party Mapam quickly took up the campaign started by Sharett against the People's Democracies and the Communist Party of Israel. *Al hamishmar* wrote: 'The trial in Hungary and the arrests in Romania in connection with emigration to Israel[15] are profoundly alarming. This line weakens the position of the left Zionist bloc. The government's policy can not serve as a justification for prohibiting immigration to Israel. The interests of the Jewish people and the political line of the Israeli government are not synonymous.'

During the recent debates in the Knesset (early January 1950) on foreign policy, serious accusations were levelled against the government by the left opposition party Mapam. Riftin, a member of the Knesset for this party, said in his speech:

> One might have supposed that Israel would speak in the international arena as a state pursuing an independent policy on the basis of equality and reciprocity; that it would be found among those states struggling unyieldingly against a new world war; that it would actively oppose the renewal of fascism; and that, as a state created in the storm of a war of liberation, it would unrelentingly support the colonial peoples' liberation struggle. Unfortunately, in all these matters the position of the present government is a great disappointment for us...

To emphasize these words, Riftin cited the following facts: at the last session of the UN General Assembly, during the election of the president of the Assembly, the Israeli delegation voted for the Phillipine candidate General Romulo, and not for the foreign minister of Czechoslovakia, Dr. Clementis, and this in spite of the considerable assistance given by the Czechoslovak People's Republic to Israel in the most difficult days of its struggle. According to Riftin, 'This was not the only case in which Israel sided with the imperialist bloc. On the contrary, Israel did not once side with the Soviet People's Democratic bloc unless other capitalist states were doing so.' The Israeli delegation voted with the imperialist bloc to include the so-called Little Assembly's report in the agenda of the UN General Assembly.[16] In the final discussion of the question of the Little Assembly, the Israeli delegation merely abstained. On the question of the jurisdiction of the Security Council and the rule of unanimity among the Great Powers, Israel voted counter to the very foundation of the UN's existence. Israel did not vote against the discussion of the question of the United Nations' armed forces. Israel did not support the Soviet Union's peaceful

15. See Doc. 231 and n. 1 there.
16. See Doc. 298 and n. 2 there.

proposals insisting on arms reduction and on the prohibition of atomic weapons, but followed the line proposed by the imperialist powers. The government of Israel has still not raised its voice against the imperialists' efforts to legalize Nazism. On the question of Libyan independence,[17] the Israeli delegate was two-faced: he supported independence in words, but did not vote accordingly. On the basis of these facts, Riftin declared that 'the government's policy on fundamental global issues was misguided from the point of view of the liberation struggle of progressive humankind... and in the search for false and temporary friends, could well antagonize steadfast ones'.

Responding to the opposition's criticism, the prime minister branded Riftin's speech as 'a sermon by a preacher from the Cominform', and put his own view of the matter into the following words:

> What we have heard from Mr. Riftin is a complaint against the government of Israel because it does not vote with the Cominform at the UN on general international matters. I would like to tell him that the State of Israel does not intend to join the Cominform, nor has the Cominform asked it to do so. The leaders of the Cominform are communists, not members of Mapam. The communists who run the Soviet Union are statesmen, and they understand that Israel has its own approach, its own needs and the contacts it requires, and it would not enter their heads to propose this. It is clear that if they did suggest this to us, we would decline, very politely but quite firmly.

The decisions taken on Jerusalem at the Fourth Session of the UN Assembly were subjected to widespread discussion throughout Israel, and in the Israeli press. The government leaders Ben-Gurion and Sharett established the reactionary press line that, allegedly, in spite of all Israel's efforts to be useful to the Soviet Union in resolving international problems, the USSR did not take into account the changed political and economic circumstances in dealing with the statute for Jerusalem, but preferred to follow its own interests and retain its former position on internationalization of the city. This led to the formation of a united front against Israel, which includes the 'Soviet bloc', the Catholic bloc and the Arab bloc. At this point, Ben-Gurion expressed the hope of the government of Israel that 'the Soviet bloc will change its mind about Jerusalem'.

The paper *Al hamishmar*, drawing general conclusions from statements made by reactionary sources, wrote in an editorial: 'The enemies of the Soviet Union in our country have tried to interpret the Soviet position as follows: the Soviet Union bases itself on the resolutions of 29 November, and that means that we must renounce the Galilee, Jaffa and other places.' Analyzing the Jerusalem problem and the USSR's attitude to it, the paper goes on to say that 'the statements of the Soviet Union and its representative Tsarapkin about

17. The question of the future of the former Italian colonies was discussed at the UN in 1949 and 1950. Israel, a new member at the UN and without any direct interest in the matter, was subjected to various pressures. In fact, it finally voted with the Soviet bloc for the independence of Libya and abstained on the question of Eritrea.

Jerusalem do not cast any doubt on the Soviet Union's friendly attitude to Israel, although in this important and sensitive question, its position has been different from ours'.

Israel's position on the Jerusalem question has been set out a number of times. Ben-Gurion, speaking in the Knesset on 5 December 1949, stated specifically:

> Today we can not regard the resolution of 29 November 1947 as still having any moral force, since the United Nations has not succeeded in implementing its own resolutions. In our eyes the resolution of 29 November on Jerusalem has lost its validity.

Whereas in the first most difficult months of the state's existence, the official press sometimes published material claiming to give an objective assessment of relations with the USSR, later on, as its economic and political dependence on the US increased, and as the ruling circles tightened their hold on the civil service and police forces, the anti-Soviet and anti-democratic direction in the present policy of the government of Israel intensified. On 27 December 1948 the paper *Davar* published, under the headline 'The Soviet Union Is Consistently Faithful to the Resolutions of 29 November', an article which stated:

> The Soviet delegation has proved its firm and consistent faithfulness to last year's UN resolutions. One would not expect it to look askance on our gains in Galilee, or to lack understanding of our attitude to Jerusalem. But it believes that its main task at present is to counter any threat to the resolutions of 29 November and thus to oppose any revision of this decision, even if it were to be in our interest.

Sharett, the minister of foreign affairs, speaking at a meeting of the Mapai Party council (according to the paper *Haaretz* of 19 January 1949), said:

> America must understand that we can not join her against the USSR, but the Soviet Union must know that we can not forgo the assistance of American Jewry or of the US itself. We shall not give up on immigration from Eastern Europe, nor shall we give up on Western Jewry. There were some demands from the West with which we have refused to comply, and there may be demands from the East with which we shall refuse to comply.

According to the newspaper *Davar* of 11 March 1949, Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, speaking in the Knesset, answered the opposition's criticism, in which the government was accused of aligning with the West, in these terms: 'We shall pursue the policy of the provisional government, which is well known. You favour increased hostility to one side and tactless and tasteless praise for the other. This is not neutrality.' Having in mind the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies, Ben-Gurion said that 'the help we got from them was merely verbal'.

This statement by the prime minister evoked a particularly sharp reaction from progressive elements in society. In Tel Aviv and Haifa large public gatherings were held to express recognition and gratitude for the decisive efforts of the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies in the creation of the State of Israel.

The pro-American orientation of Israeli foreign policy is also visible in the Israeli government's attitude to the traitorous Tito clique. Relations between Israel and Yugoslavia are acquiring a special significance. Although Sharett assured us that 'political considerations played no part' in Israeli–Yugoslav economic relations, the systematic support for the Tito clique in newspapers close to the government suggests the contrary. It is also of some interest that since the State of Israel came into being only one major foreign sports team has played there, and that is the Yugoslav football team, whose appearance was widely publicized. At present the Histadrut has taken upon itself the considerable task of distributing Yugoslav films, and under the Histadrut's 'patronage' films from Yugoslavia are to be shown in workers' and agricultural settlements.

All this takes on a certain hue in light of fact that the events organized by the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR not only evoke no sympathy from the Histadrut, but even encounter opposition in such matters as making premises and funds available.

The Mapai majority in the Histadrut has shied away from a decisive struggle against the trade union schismatics in favour of strengthening the unity of the World Federation of Trade Unions. It has also refused to support worldwide progressive public opinion in the struggle for peace and for convening a Congress of Partisans of Peace.[18] When the League for Friendly Relations sent a telegram greeting the organizing committee of the Congress of Partisans of Peace in Paris, the paper *Hador* disingenuously accused the league of the most terrible 'crime' because 'by taking this step, the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR has exceeded its mandate, has adopted a distinctly partisan position and has become embroiled in a problem which is, unfortunately, a burning issue in the clash between the Western and Eastern blocs'.

The Israeli government is a prisoner of the policy of the imperialist states and has therefore adopted a tactic of procrastination in such matters as recognizing the Chinese People's Republic.[19] It decided on recognition only in the wake of the capitalist states, particularly Britain.

Israel's declared 'policy of neutrality' is thus turning into direct political, economic and ideological cooperation with the West.

The present policy of the government of Israel's policy towards the USSR and the People's Democracies is insincere, evasive and unfriendly.

[...]

Conclusion

The State of Israel is a bourgeois state along the lines of the West European 'democratic' states. As in most of these states, where 'socialist' governments,

18. The World Congress of the Partisans of Peace took place in Paris, 20–25 April 1949.
19. Israel recognized the People's Republic of China in the beginning of 1950, and supported its representation in the UN, but no diplomatic relations were established between the two countries. See also Doc. 332 and n. 2 there.

which carry out the will of monopoly capital, are in power, so, too, in Israel power is in the hands of a government which consists of a coalition between the reformist party Mapai and the bourgeois–clerical parties. This government is firmly committed to defending the interests of the major Jewish bourgeoisie and foreign capital. The 'workers'' party Mapai represents the 'workers'' aristocracy and petty bourgeoisie, and in its program and practical activity is indistinguishable from the British labourites, the French socialists or German social democrats, and its leaders – Ben-Gurion, Sharett, Aharonovich and Lubyaniker – are no different from Attlee, Bevin, Blum and Schumacher.

In its economic policy the government of Israel, unable to cope with the difficulties arising from military operations and mass immigration, is conducting an offensive against the standard of living of the toiling masses, is encouraging private initiative and profits of local capitalists, and trying to attract foreign capital into the country, which inevitably threatens the independence of a country that has not yet reached its full strength. In domestic policy there is increasing recourse to police methods in order to crush the democratic movement, break up demonstrations and arrest the demonstrators; nationalism based on Zionist ideology is intensifying, and there is a growth of chauvinist feelings, supported by practical measures taken by the ruling circles to oppress the Arab population of the country. The government's reactionary domestic policy activates all the reactionary forces and pro-fascist groups and organizations. Lastly, in its foreign policy the government of Israel is moving towards a direct alignment with the US, without even masking it with formal 'neutrality', as it did in the first period of the state's existence, when it needed support from the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies. Israel's attitude to the USSR is beginning to take on a hostile nature, although – more for reasons of domestic policy than any others – this has not yet been revealed in public. However, as the campaign against the progressive forces gathers strength, in accordance with the demands and example of Israel's patron, the US, and also in connection with the issue of the immigration of Jews from the USSR to Israel – a question which has already been raised with us, and over which, as Sharett put it, Israel will 'inevitably clash' with the USSR – we must expect that the hostile attitude to the Soviet Union will be evinced in a more open and conspicuous form.

The Israeli government's anti-popular domestic policy and anti-national pro-American foreign policy arouses indignation among the country's progressive forces, which are grouped around the Communist Party of Israel, the United Workers' Party Mapam, and the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR. The increase in strikes and demonstrations, the unmasking of the anti-national character of Israeli foreign policy, the mass meetings and gatherings for the USSR's revolutionary festivities, especially for Stalin's 70th birthday, show that the progressive forces are growing and multiplying, and will offer serious resistance to the conversion of Israel into an Anglo-American bridgehead for an attack on the Soviet Union. This means that we must use the press and other means to expose the anti-popular and anti-national

character of the policy of the bourgeois–clerical government of Israel, which is leading the country to the loss of its independence; and we must at the same time support the progressive forces as they struggle to strengthen Israel's independence and to establish friendly relations with the Soviet Union.[20]

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

307
V.A. Zorin to M.A. Suslov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.021, OP.4, P.5, D.121, L.1
Moscow, 22 March 1950
Secret

To Comrade M.A. Suslov,

To supplement the memorandum on Zionism, which was based on material from the Communist International and sent to you on 21 March, I am attaching two copies of the memorandum on this question which was compiled by the Department of the Near and Middle East of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs and which quotes statements by the Zionist leaders about their attitude to the USSR and the People's Democracies.[1] This paper also cites facts about recent activities – chiefly of the representatives of the State of Israel – hostile to the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies.

If the need arises, the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs can send material from Israeli papers and periodicals which will give a more complete picture of the Zionist leaders' attitude to the USSR and the People's Democracies.

V. Zorin

Doc. 306
20. Sent to Vyshinskii, Lavrent'ev and the Middle East Department.

Doc. 307
1. Not traced.

308
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F 059, OP.24, P.52, D.332, L.117
Tel Aviv, 1 April 1950

Sneh told me[1] that the publication of Prudkov's article in *Literaturnaia gazeta* had been a great surprise to Sharett, and that when he saw what was in the article, it put him into a state of depression.[2] Sharett assumed that Soviet diplomats understood the difficulties of his position and took into consideration that he was doing everything possible to ensure that Israeli policy was not hostile to the USSR. He was doing all that he could, and had often dared not to vote for proposals by the US, which for Israel was a courageous act. Moreover, in contrast to Ben-Gurion, who took the liberty of attacking the USSR in veiled language and the People's Democracies (for instance Pauker)[3] quite openly, he himself had never said anything against the USSR, but, on the contrary, had tried to correct Ben-Gurion's statements. Finally, Israel was the only country in the Middle East which allowed freedom of activity to pro-Soviet organizations like the Communist Party, Mapam and the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR. Sneh said that a member of Mapai who was close to Sharett had told him this.

Sneh said that in left-wing circles like Mapam and to some extent in the centre (Yaari and Hazan), Prudkov's article had been greeted with great satisfaction. As is well-known, Sneh went on, Ben-Gurion and Sharett, in response to criticism from Mapam and the Communist Party, said often that the USSR understood their position and difficulties better than those left and centre parties, since it did not criticize the government of Israel and its foreign policy as did Mapam and the Communist Party. Now, Ben-Gurion and Sharett have lost the use of this argument.

Ershov

1. For Sneh's links with the Soviet legation see Docs. 181, 365, 379, and Meir Avizohar's article 'Dr. Moshe Sneh's Pro-Soviet Actions in 1949', pp. 399–426.
2. On 25 March 1950, *Literaturnaia gazeta* published Prudkov's article, entitled 'Acheson's Follower from Tel Aviv', in which Sharett was described as 'a malicious chatterbox and slanderer' and the government of Israel as pursuing a policy of grovelling before Washington. See also Doc. 311.
3. See Doc. 276, n. 1.

309
M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 3 April 1950

Levavi suggests: In reaction to the attacks in the Soviet press,[1] *Davar* should publish a comprehensive article which would contradict especially the specific examples and allegations in the articles by Zviagin in *Novoe vremia* and by Prudkov in *Literaturnaia gazeta.* Not polemics, but rather a substantive, serious analysis, not apologetic but also without provocation. It may perhaps, be worthwhile disclosing our numerous and diverse approaches to the Soviet Union, which bore no fruit. Despite the difficulty of the wording, *vis-à-vis* both the West and the Russians, it will be necessary to address the Jerusalem issue and to ask how a peace settlement that will be acceptable to the Soviet Union could be established in the Near East. The article should reflect the assumption that the Soviet Union is ready to show friendship even towards a small state which does not have a communist government but which is determined to preserve a neutral stance and not under any circumstances to be party to action detrimental to Soviet interests. It should be written by Herzl Berger.

Namir

310
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett (Tel Aviv, 19 April 1950)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.24, P.52, D.332, LL.141–5

On 18 April I paid a call to Sharett at his invitation. Sharett said that he 'wanted to make a statement to me about a certain article in the Soviet publication *Literaturnaia gazeta* of 25 March'.[1] He went on to say that under the existing regime in the Soviet Union the press adhered strictly to the official line, especially in matters of foreign policy, and, therefore, these articles worried them a good deal. The article used such terms of abuse as 'liar', 'slanderer' and so forth, and Sharett had no intention of replying to them.

I interrupted him to say that I would not get into an argument about this article since *Literaturnaia gazeta* was not a publication of the Soviet government.[2]

Sharett answered that the article in *Literaturnaia gazeta* dealt with Israel's policy and that he must supply a number of explanations. Sharett denied that

---

Doc. 309
1. See Docs. 302, 308 and notes there.

Doc. 310
1. See Doc. 308, n. 2 and Doc. 311.
2. *Literaturnaia gazeta* was published by the Union of Soviet Writers.

Israel was turning into an American colony or that the Israeli delegation at the UN session had tagged along after Acheson. He said that the US loan involved no burdensome conditions and that Israel had asked the USSR for a loan, but had received no response. Israel had not turned to the US for a second loan, but was looking for loans and capital wherever they could be found. They were needed to reinforce the state and its independence.

When I remarked that foreign capital, as was well known, did not reinforce, but rather weakened independence, Sharett replied that in order to reinforce its independence, Israel had to increase its population and to build factories and houses, and for that money was needed.

The United States' loan would not open the way to American domination of the Israeli economy. The US was a mighty power and if it wanted to put pressure on Israel, that would be very hard on us, but it would not have to make use of a loan for that purpose. He did not know whether the Soviet Union, when it voted for the creation of the Jewish state, had appreciated the implications, namely, that it could not exist with a population of 600,000 thousand and a backward economy.

Sharett went on to say that the government of Israel had invited Lowdermilk in a private capacity and as a specialist on irrigation,[3] and he remarked that Israel had asked the USSR for a specialist on afforestation as an adviser to the prime minister, but had received no response.[4] As for the Kaiser motor assembly plant in Haifa,[5] it would enable Israel to export motor cars to its neighbours, to Turkey, Bulgaria and other countries. Some of the People's Democracies had asked Israel to supply them with American goods, which they could not get directly from the US. For example, Israel supplied Romania with penicillin, which it received as a semi-finished product from the US. The Kaiser factory would not hold any key position in industry. If the USSR wanted to build a factory in Israel, Israel would be glad to discuss the matter. As for supplying Israel with arms, Sharett went on, it was not the US which was proposing to send arms to Israel, but Israel which was compelled to ask the US to supply them. Israel needed to do this since the Arab countries had overtaken Israel and were significantly ahead in several types of armaments. Israel had asked the USSR for arms as well, but had received no response, apart from Vyshinskii's retort to one of the Israeli representatives at the UN: 'If we give you a revolver, people will start screaming that we've given you an atom bomb.'

Sharett then said that the article in *Literaturnaia gazeta* had greatly distressed him, and that this explained his state of agitation. The article had not had a positive effect on our relations.

In answer to that, I pointed out to Sharett that he had no grounds to make such statements just because of a single article in *Literaturnaia gazeta*. If he

3. See Doc. 59, n. 3.
4. See Doc. 270.
5. The US based Kaiser-Fraser Motor Company was at the time negotiating the establishment of an assembly plant in Haifa.

looked at his own press, he would see that it was conducting a systematic campaign of slander against the Soviet Union and its leaders. In our conversation of 15 November,[6] I had brought to his attention a similar item in the Israeli press and had expected the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take the necessary measures to stop the publication of hostile and slanderous articles; however, there had been no changes in the attitude of the Israeli press – on the contrary the anti-Soviet campaign had intensified. I cited a number of examples and pointed out that the leading role in the anti-Soviet campaign was being taken by the government party paper *Hador* and its periodical *Bterem.*[7] I emphasized that the Israeli press countenanced systematic personal attacks against the chairman of the Council of Ministers Stalin. I cited a considerable number of examples of this and stated that such utterances in the Israeli press produced an unfavourable impression on Soviet public opinion. I added that before talking about the article in *Literaturnaia gazeta*, a stop should be put to the slanderous anti-Soviet campaign in the Israeli press against the Soviet Union and the head of the Soviet government. In conclusion, I expressed the hope that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would take steps to stop the anti-Soviet campaign in the Israeli press.

Sharett answered that he understood my sharp reaction to his statement, but he had to comment that existing legislation in Israel did not allow interference in the affairs of the press. However, he admitted there and then that in connection with our conversation of 15 November, the 'newspapers were given a scolding', and I drew his attention to this contradiction. Sharett said that, of course, the newspapers took the government's opinion into account, but he 'was not aware that any newspaper had insulted the head of the Soviet government'.

He had felt it necessary to react to the article in *Literaturnaia gazeta* because 'it contained nothing but abuse, and a manipulation of facts'. Sharett went on to say that they were very interested in maintaining friendly relations between Israel and the USSR, without adapting their state system to that of Soviet Union, and accepting the USSR as it was. They hoped that we would be able to understand one another. This did not mean that there could not be points of controversy between us, but these ought to be settled in a friendly manner. I answered that this depended primarily on Israel. After that, Sharett said that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel had prepared a reply to the legation's last note on the conscription of Soviet citizens living in Israel, and he handed me the note, which reaffirmed the former position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the basis of international law.[8]

---

6. See Doc. 278.
7. See No. 284.
8. See Doc. 311, n. 3. On 23 July 1950, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Lavrent'ev asked Ershov to transmit the Soviet reply to the Israeli note of 18 April 1950. According to this reply, exemption from the military draft had no connection with the repatriation of Soviet citizens from Israel to the USSR (see AVP RF, f.059, op.24, p.27, d.154, l.104).

Saying goodbye, Sharett expressed the hope that our exchange of views regarding the press would work to our mutual benefit. I answered that I would like this to be so, and Sharett said that he was convinced that it would. I commented: 'We shall see from tomorrow's Israeli newspapers.'

Ershov

311
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Legation in the USSR

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/3
Moscow, 19 April 1950

Ershov was summoned to the [foreign] minister. A lengthy conversation developed concerning the article in *Literaturnaia [gazeta]*.[1] The minister analyzed the article paragraph by paragraph noting the distortions and fabrications, using those very terms. The minister replied that the journal was not a government organ and expressed the views of its editorial board alone. He cited a long list of attacks on them in our papers and said he had expected us to take action after having pointed at one time to a gross offence towards him. He received a reply concerning our freedom of the press and the government's inability to restrict it.[2] An interesting conversation, details in the letter.

On the same occasion he was given a detailed and rational note concerning the conscription of their citizens.[3]

Eliashiv

1. See Doc. 308 and n. 2 there. For the Soviet minister's account of this meeting, see Doc. 310.
2. See Doc. 278.
3. In its note dated 18 April 1950, the Israeli government stated that a distinction should be made between territorial jurisdiction (which, according to many legal authorities, entitled the state to mobilize its residents) and the personal sovereignty of individuals. It agreed, however, to examine applications for exemption from military service of individual Soviet citizens who did not intend to settle in Israel on a permanent basis, on condition that these residents leave Israel without delay and be readmitted to the USSR (ISA 130.11/2507/12). See also Doc. 303.

312
Meeting: A.D. Shchiborin – M. Namir (Moscow, 19 April 1950)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.021, OP.4, P.5, D.120, LL.2–7

At 15.00 today I received Namir at his request. After the usual exchange of greetings, Namir said that he had come to inform me about a number of questions and to discuss them with me:

1. He told me that Dr. Eliashiv, director of the East European Division of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been appointed Israeli minister to Czechoslovakia and Hungary. The new head of the East European Division is likely to be Levavi, who is now counsellor at the Israeli legation in Moscow.

2. Israel's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sharett has invited the members of the Trusteeship Council, except Kuomintang [Nationalist] China and Iraq, with whom Israel has no diplomatic relations, to visit Jerusalem during a break in the council's work, in order to become cognizant of the feelings of the population of the city. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs would like to know whether Mr. Tsarapkin, who represents the USSR on the council, would be able to accept this invitation.[1]

I answered that I could not say anything on this question.

3. On 13 April 1950 Israeli radio broadcast a special program in memory of Mayakovsky, In addition, the Society for Friendly Relations with the USSR (organized by the ruling Mapai Party after it left the progressive League for Friendly Relations with the USSR – A.S.) put on a concert of Soviet music, at which representatives of the Soviet legation, Mukhin and Fedorin, were present. In addition, using material supplied by the USSR legation in Israel, the society arranged an exhibition on the rehabilitation of the Donbass. It would be desirable for the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to inform VOKS about this. I promised to do so.

4. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs instructed him to inform the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the attitude of the government of Israel to the outcome of the meeting of Arab countries.[2] The government of Israel considers that the resolutions and the general proceedings of the session of Arab countries demonstrated the league's markedly aggressive intentions towards Israel, although there were no grounds for this attitude. This indicated a step backward in the Arab position. There is no doubt that the cause of this aggressiveness was Egypt's desire to take upon itself the task of consolidating the Arab

1. The invitations were delivered on 3 April. Most representatives declined the invitation and the visit did not materialize (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel,* Vol. 5, No. 168, p. 238).
2. The 12th session of the Arab League Council, which took place from the end of March to the beginning of April 1950, was preoccupied with political and security matters. In addition to discussion of a collective security pact (see Doc. 278, n. 1), the league discussed the negotiations between Israel and Jordan. Jordan found itself isolated and a decision was taken forbidding the league members to negotiate separately with Israel.

countries and strengthening the league, which is falling apart. To achieve this, Egypt had tried to mobilize all the Arab countries, even Iraq, which had found it difficult to oppose Transjordan's peaceful intentions towards Israel. Egypt had set all the Arab countries against the unofficial negotiations conducted by Transjordan and Israel for a permanent peace instead of an armistice. Egypt's position was an expression of the aggressive attitude of the Egyptian monarchy which was known for its antisemitic and anti-Israeli views. The present government of Egypt, composed of Wafdists,[3] does not, in the Israeli government's eyes, entirely share the opinion of the court, but does not want to oppose it for internal tactical reasons. The increase in Arab aggressiveness coincided with Bevin's visit to the Arab countries. His sharp anti-Israeli speech in the House of Commons a week ago was wholly characteristic.[4] Bevin is evidently trying to distract the attention of Egypt from the Sudan and to direct it against Israel.

A collective security pact among the Arab countries may have long-term aims, but at present it is plainly directed against Israel. No matter what government is in power, Israel will never join any bloc directed against states which are members of the UN. This neutrality is an objective necessity for the entire Jewish people, irrespective of class. The Jewish people have a greater interest in peace than anyone else. The Arab League and the forces behind it understand this feeling perfectly, and that was why Israel was a nuisance to them.

From the Israeli point of view, and that of all progressive elements in the world, it is necessary to split asunder this aggressive unity of the league. The Arab League has just succeeded in making Transjordan join in supporting a resolution in which it has no interest. Egypt has taken the liberty of bringing on to the stage the forgotten fascist agent, the mufti of Palestine, and his sham government in Gaza,[5] even though this threatens to complicate matters with Iraq and Transjordan. I thanked Namir for this information.

5. The Israeli government has just now formed a commission to collect photographs of ancient Hebrew manuscripts in all countries. Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, as chairman of this commission, requested that the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs let him know whether it would be possible to receive regularly from the USSR photographs of Hebrew manuscripts located in the USSR.

In addition, in connection with the reply of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the possibility of receiving photostats of a number of manuscripts, the Israel legation would like to know the formal procedure for placing such an order.

---

3 See Doc. 63, n. 2.

4. Bevin paid a one-day visit to Cairo on 28 January on his way home from the conference of Commonwealth foreign ministers in Colombo. He conversed with the Egyptian prime minister and lunched with King Faruq. Bevin's remarks about Israel were made during a general debate on foreign policy in the House of Commons and in response to a question by Eden, who asked why no progress had been made with regard to the opening of the Haifa oil refineries. Bevin's reply exonerated Iraq and blamed Israel for not complying with UN resolutions in general (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 5, No. 161, pp. 219–20).

5. See Doc. 174, and n. 9 there.

I said that it was difficult for me to give an immediate answer to the first question. I would bring Mr. Ben-Gurion's request to the attention of the authorities in the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs; but I could say that the Lenin Library, which kept these manuscripts, was extremely busy with orders for replacements of books in the libraries of the USSR which had been damaged during the war. As for the second question about the formal procedure for getting copies, this should be done through the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

6. The Israeli legation has not yet received an answer from the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the dispatch to Israel of a Soviet specialist in afforestation.[6] The USSR would be very interested in having a Soviet specialist work independently as adviser to the prime minister and study the problems of afforestation in hot and desert localities. The work of a Soviet specialist would also be a great help to Israel.

I answered that I could not tell the minister anything, because I knew nothing yet about the answer to this question.

7. The periodical *Novoe vremia,* No. 14, carried a note criticizing the banning in Israel of the Soviet film *Court of Honour* and gave a fairly ironic account of the situation in Israel. But *Novoe vremia* evidently did not know that the Board of Film Censorship of the Israeli Ministry of the Interior had recently banned five American films which had referred directly or indirectly to the Soviet Union. Namir then handed me a note listing the American films which had been banned in Israel: *The Iron Curtain, The Conspirator, The Red Danube, On the Wrong Track* and *Give Me Freedom.* In principle, this committee does not allow any film to be screened in Israel which could offend a state with which Israel maintains friendly relations. The film *Court of Honour* was banned solely for these reasons.

I said that I would bring this statement by the minister to the attention of my superiors.

8. The Soviet press published a report about the arrival of Jules Moch[7] in Israel at the invitation of the Mapai Party. It said that Moch was discussing with the Histadrut its departure from the World Federation of Trade Unions.

According to the information available to the Israeli legation, Mapai did not invite Moch and the Histadrut is not negotiating with him. Jules Moch was invited by an organization which had engaged in illegal immigration to Israel under the British occupation, and for which Moch had done great service in the past. Moch's visit had no political aims.

[...][8]

The conversation lasted an hour. Third Secretary V. Gnedykh was present.[9]

Deputy Director of the Near and Middle East Department
A. Shchiborin

6. See Doc. 270.
7. French deputy prime minister and minister of the interior.
8. Section 9, which deals with the article in *Literaturnaia gazeta* (see Doc. 310), has been omitted.
9. For Namir's account of this conversation, see Doc. 315.

313
A.Ia. Vyshinskii to P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.24, P.27, D.154, L 68–9
Moscow, 19 April 1950

Comrade Malik has been instructed to make the following statement to Trygve Lie:

> In connection with the discussion in the Trusteeship Council regarding the statute for Jerusalem, the government of the USSR has instructed me to make the following statement:
>
> As is well-known, the USSR's delegation at the Fourth Session of the General Assembly, following the position which it adopted in earlier sessions of the Assembly, voted in favour of Resolution No. 303/IV of 9 December 1949 on the creation of a permanent international regime for Jerusalem, with the Trusteeship Council as its governing authority. The USSR's delegation adhered to this position in the subsequent discussion of the Jerusalem question as well.
>
> It has now become clear that this decision of the General Assembly satisfies neither the Arab nor the Jewish population of the city of Jerusalem or of Palestine as a whole. In these circumstances, the government of the USSR considers it impossible to continue supporting this resolution of the General Assembly. The Soviet government expresses its confidence that the UN will find a solution to the problem of Jerusalem which will be acceptable to both the Arab and the Jewish population of this city.

Mr. Secretary-General, please bring this statement to the attention of the member states of the United Nations.[1]

Vyshinskii

1. This information was delivered to UN member states on 17 April. For the first Israeli reaction to the Soviet reversal of policy, see Doc. 316. On 22 April 1950 Ershov telegraphed Moscow with a review of Israeli press reactions to the Soviet decision (AVP RF, f.059, op.24, d.332, ll.151–3).

314
USSR Legation in Israel to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.3, P.8, D.1, LL.104–6
Tel Aviv, 19 April 1950
Secret

[...][1]

II. The USSR's Relations with Israel
On 18 May 1948 the Soviet Union was the first to recognize the State of Israel *de jure*, and on 26 May established diplomatic relations with it. On 9 August 1948, the staff of the Soviet legation arrived in Tel Aviv. On 17 August, the USSR minister in Israel presented his credentials to Prime Minister Ben-Gurion. The Soviet Union supported Israel's membership in the UN and certain other international organizations such as the Universal Postal Union.

Leading Israeli Zionist circles linked the support of the Soviet Union in the matter of establishing the State of Israel with permission for Jews to emigrate freely from the USSR to Israel. The USSR's negative response to this question was regarded as a hostile act towards the State of Israel and served as a pretext for unleashing widespread anti-Soviet propaganda in Israel, which compelled the USSR legation in Israel to make an appropriate *démarche* to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (15 November 1949).[2]

Simultaneously, Israel's legation in Moscow increased its illegal activity, urging Soviet Jews to give up their Soviet citizenship and to immigrate to Israel. In addition, the legation started to publish a bulletin with Zionist propaganda, which it distributed to public organizations and private persons. This activity was stopped only after intervention by the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The government of Israel, in order to parry the opposition's accusations criticizing its pro-American alignment, took a number of steps through its legation in Moscow which were designed to demonstrate 'the neutrality of the country between East and West' (requests for the supply of arms, for the dispatch of Israeli officers to the USSR for training, and for a loan). With the same end in view, questions were asked about the possible dispatching to Israel of a specialist in afforestation, doctors, a delegation to celebrate the anniversary of the establishment of Weizmann Institute, etc.

The real attitude of the ruling circles in Israel towards the USSR can be judged by the following facts:

1. The right-wing Israeli press never ceases printing malicious and slanderous articles about the Soviet Union and its leaders; moreover, a leading

1. Part I, 'The Position of the USSR at the UN in Regard to the State of Israel' has not been included, since it repeats material presented in previous documents.
2. See Doc. 278.

part in this campaign is played by the ruling party Mapai's publications *Hador*, *Bterem* and so forth.

2. The Israeli government is dragging its feet over the transfer of our property in Israel to us and defends the illegal actions of its authorities, which have seized some of our buildings.

3. The Israeli government is not issuing import licences to firms which want to trade with the USSR, and at the same time it is encouraging the import of American goods at blatantly higher prices.

4. The Israeli government imposes restrictions on book companies which trade in Soviet literature at a time when the Israeli book market is full of American gutter publications and the 'works' of Trotsky, Ruth Fischer[3] etc.

5. The Israeli governing party, Mapai, has withdrawn from the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR and, together with the fascist party Herut, has organized a League for Strengthening Friendship with the US.

315
M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 20 April 1950

To the Minister. The following is a report of my conversation yesterday with Shchiborin, which lasted an hour and a quarter. One of the aides took notes.[1] Bakulin has not yet recuperated from his illness.

(a) The Arab League:

I explained our assessment in detail in the wake of your telegram 344, paras. 1 and 3. I emphasized and re-emphasized the issue of the mufti in order to get him to respond, but Shchiborin did not take the bait and concentrated his questions on the league: Why had they revived it if the pact's intentions were collective security? Was there rivalry amongst the Arab states themselves? Were the aggressive resolutions directed solely against Israel, or was the pact perhaps directed against the Soviet Union? I seized on his questions and added: Our assessment is based on discussions and declarations that were made public and on other reports. As for secret plans, in my private opinion, it may be assumed that the league and the foreign elements that stand behind

---

Doc. 314

3. Ruth Fischer (real name – Elfriede Golke, 1895–1961), politician and writer, a leading personality in the Communist Party of Germany, 1921–26; later excluded for 'left-wing deviations'. In 1933 she left Germany; from 1940 she lived in the US and from 1945 — in Paris. Her book *Stalin und der deutsche Kommunismus*, was published in 1948.

Doc. 315

1. For Shchiborin's version of this conversation, see Doc. 312.

it harbour far-reaching intentions, but there is no real contradiction between overt enmity towards Israel and a concealed tendency towards broader aggression. It is not only the very existence of Israel within its present borders, but also its independent policy, that is apparently infuriating them. The league and its supporters are well aware that the reports disseminated from time to time about our supposed inclination to identify with the West are completely unfounded. They know that neutrality, world peace and friendship with all members of the UN express not only the subjective desire of our government, its declared stand and its policy in practice, but also an objective need of our country and of the Jewish people everywhere. Israel is charged with the ingathering of the exiles, and will not undermine the needs of the nation in the Diaspora, which supplies it with manpower and funds. The effort to rebuild the ruins of the reactionary league and its aggressive resolutions, are thus injurious not only to Israel and to peace in the Near East, but to all those who seek peace.

However, a neutral Israel which strives for peace with any of its Arab neighbours who are desirous of this, is a primary and major obstacle to Arab aggression, and a factor that could cause [Arab] external unity to disintegrate, since its common basis is entirely negative and its internal foundations are shaky. Therefore, the barbs are directed first and foremost against us. Hence the policy of my government, including our attempts to reach agreement with our adversaries, [notably] with Abdallah, is the correct and realistic policy at this time, and may enable Israel to ward off the aggressive unity that is taking shape in the Middle East and at the same time to thwart and weaken more extensive machinations.

Shchiborin asked which foreign powers were especially interested in the [existence of the] league. I replied that I had no concrete proof, but the proximity of the timing between the visit of Bevin to Cairo, the league's deliberations, and his hostile speech in parliament gave grounds to believe that he found the tension with Israel useful to divert Egypt's attention away from Suez and the Sudan. We are not frightened by the new initiative, but neither are we complacent. We will forgo no opportunity to acquire effective means of defence in the face of potential threats. [Shchiborin] listened attentively to this entire section and, I think, also understood it clearly. He said he would pass it on.

(b) Invitation to Tsarapkin.

As per your telegram 338 I said that the foreign minister believed that viewing things at first-hand would bring about a change of approach, do away with abstract plans, and help his government understand the problem of Jerusalem. I asked him whether they would accept an invitation. He replied that Ershov had sent a cable on this subject, but he did not know what the decision would be. He made no mention of Malik's letter on Jerusalem,[2] which we learned about from the radio seven hours after the conversation.

---

2. See Doc. 313.

(c) Israel in the Soviet press:

I cited the list of American films which had been banned, as per your cables 8877 and 342, and I castigated him for the distortion in *Novoe vremia*. I mentioned Jules Moch as per your cables 346 and 347. As for the vilification in *Literaturnaia gazeta*, I said that I was astounded and shocked at the distortions, the crude style, and the insulting epithets. Our press interpreted them as an insult to the state. Our Foreign Ministry spokesman stated that it was difficult to believe that such things had appeared in print and that he would wait until he received the article in the original. Shchiborin replied that they had a free press and that his government did not assume responsibility for it. However, his main emphasis, which he repeated twice, was: It was not, repeat not, [they] who had begun the attacks; the Israeli press had begun them and it was now filled with anti-Soviet propaganda, extending even to insulting our head of state. When I asked him what papers he was referring to, he replied: *Beterem, Hador, Haboker* and *Hatzofeh*. In early April they were informed that *Beterem* had published highly offensive remarks about Stalin. He intimated that Ershov had sent many complaints about us. My principal argument was that there was simply no comparison between the diverse information Israeli readers got about the USSR and that which local readers received about Israel. The attitude of *Davar* and *Haaretz*, the most serious and popular papers, is certainly fair. In addition, organizations, public personages, and parties – even rival parties – which foster friendly relations with the Soviet Union, can issue counter-statements, whereas Israel is denounced here constantly. The exchange on this point was not without tension, though it was very courteous throughout. We both promised to convey the content of the conversation to our ministers.

(d) I told him in my personal capacity about the Mayakovsky broadcast and of your notification about the concert at the museum and the preparations of the Society for Friendly Relations with the USSR for the Donbass exhibition. He said he would tell VOKS.

I requested formal permission to photostat manuscripts as per your cable 341. I will send another cable on this subject.

Namir

316
Meeting: A. Eban – Ia. Malik (New York, 20 April 1950)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2443/7
Confidential

The conversation took place at the permanent Soviet delegation of the United Nations and lasted fifty minutes.

I began by expressing appreciation of the letter which Mr. Malik had circulated through the secretary-general on the subject of Jerusalem.[1] The decision of the government of the USSR to review its attitude on this question had made a deep impression on us, as also had the conclusion which the Soviet government had reached. The principle enunciated in Mr. Malik's letter, namely that the United Nations should seek a solution acceptable to the peoples of Jerusalem and of the whole of Palestine, was one which we fully accepted and upheld. My government was engaged in considering the proposals which it would submit first to the Trusteeship Council in June, and then to the General Assembly in September. These proposals would satisfy the principles set forth in Mr. Malik's communication to the secretary-general. I should, however, welcome an opportunity of discussing this matter further with him when our proposals had taken more definite form and before they were officially submitted or published.

Mr. Malik replied that the Soviet government, although artificially prevented from participating in the work of the Trusteeship Council in Geneva, had followed the discussions attentively. It had been particularly impressed by the argument that the statute would place the people of Jerusalem under a colonial regime and would thus be a reversal of the role which the United Nations should play in these questions. Apart from his reluctance to see the United Nations become a 'colonial power', he also agreed that the main lesson of the Trusteeship Council session was that the project was destined not to be implemented. It was realistic therefore to look for a solution that could be applied.

He then asked me whether the United States had committed itself at Geneva to support the Statute.

I replied that, on the contrary, both the US and the UK were completely uncommitted. They had not voted on the text of the statute, and had actively prevented any steps towards its implementation. Mr. Malik showed great interest in what appeared to be a new fact to him, namely that the Trusteeship Council had refrained from bringing the Statute into legal force pending a further resolution of the council (Article 41 of the Statute).[2]

---

1. See Doc. 313.
2. The General Assembly resolution on the internationalization of Jerusalem of December 1949 entrusted the United Nations Trusteeship Council to complete and amend the Statute of Jerusalem previously approved by the Trusteeship Council. The new statute had been discussed

I explained that our delegation had devoted much effort to help secure this end; the effect was that the statute was not in any legal force even from the point of view of the Trusteeship Council itself. He said that this fact might now prove 'helpful'.

Pursuing the discussion of his letter to the secretary-general, I stated that there was no doubt whatever of what the population of Jewish Jerusalem, numbering some 115,000, would find 'acceptable'. This population would insist on the full maintenance and development of its integration with Israel. I was not in a position to say positively what the population of the Arab area wanted. I would, however, venture to suggest what they would not want. They would not want to live under the despotism of the draft statute. He replied: 'No people in the world consciously wishes to be colonial slaves.'

We concluded this part of the conversation by agreeing to renew our discussion when our reply to the Trusteeship Council's resolution of 4 April 1950, was fully ready.

If we were to take this conversation as our sole authority, we should reach the conclusion that the motive for the Soviet change of heart is primarily ideological and is based on the impossibility of reconciling the General Assembly's resolution with the principle of self-determination. An important factor affecting their attitude is the similarity of the Statute with the constitutions of backward colonial areas. Furthermore, the deadlock in implementation reached at Geneva may well have affected their dominant sense of realism. They have no special desire, on an issue of this kind, to throw in their lot with a losing venture.

In the light of certain remarks which Mr. Malik made at a later stage of the discussion, it would be reasonable to conclude that the Soviet Union attaches importance to the public opinion and influence which Israel can command, especially in this country. Another motive, not discussed in our conversation, is connected with the relations between the Vatican and the USSR, especially in United Nations affairs. Catholic influence is prominent in the movement for keeping the Chinese government out of the United Nations, with the enormously irksome effects on the Soviet international position. The Vatican had also been prominent in the Spanish question and in anti-Soviet moves on Human Rights questions. I conjecture that the USSR is concerned with the tendency of the Church to regard itself as a dominant factor in the United Nations.

Mr. Malik opened the second phase of our conversation by saying that he had read with interest a memorandum which I had drafted on the question of our relations with the Arabs and the problem of a final peace settlement in the Near East. He asked if he was correct in assuming that this document had been addressed to the Conciliation Commission, to which I replied affirmatively.[3]

(cont.) by the Trusteeship Council in its meetings in Geneva from 14 February to 4 April and the statute was approved on 4 April. However, an article inserted at the last stages of the discussion (No. 41) stated that the statute would come into force at a date to be determined by a resolution of the Trusteeship Council.

3. See *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 5, No. 164, pp. 223–4.

(I did not discover how he had received this document; but I presume that it reached him from the secretary-general through the acting secretary-general, Mr. Zinchenko. If this is so, I regret that we omitted to send it to the Soviet delegation directly. I should explain that Soviet representatives react with the utmost sharpness to any implication that they have lost any of their responsibilities in the United Nations, or that their voluntary absence from meetings justifies any of their colleagues in not maintaining contact. It was for this reason that I had insisted that Mr. Tsarapkin be included amongst the recipients of our invitation to visit Jerusalem, and I have no doubt that we should have committed an error if this had not been done.)

With reference to the contents of the Israel memorandum to the Conciliation Commission, Mr. Malik expressed the opinion that the Arab League was thoroughly unrealistic and ill-judged in its refusal to make peace with Israel. If they would not make peace, what did they propose to do? Did they intend to make war? He felt that it was inadmissible for a group of states to refuse to accept realities.

In reply I suggested that those who refuse to accept realities might well be credited with the hope of still changing them. Our anxiety on Arab, and especially Egyptian, rearmament was genuine. British Near East policy now had a strongly Egyptian orientation. In order to secure the renewal of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, Great Britain was bent on a special diplomatic effort. The treaty had never been popular with the Egyptian nationalist sentiment, even when it was signed in 1936.[4] Since it was the general tendency for national sentiment to become stronger and not weaker, it could be presumed that the ratification of the treaty would encounter even greater obstacles now. Conscious of this situation, Great Britain was evidently bent on proving to Egypt that the treaty relationship had tangible advantages for Egypt, as well as advantages for Britain. At any rate, whatever the motive of this rearmament, its consequences were grave for Israel.

Mr. Malik said that he found this analysis of Britain's policy in Egypt of great interest. He added, 'I think the British are arming the Egyptians against us, not against you.'

I replied that this was precisely the 'assurance' that we received in London when we raised the matter. Irrespective of the merits of the world strategic problem, however, the fact remained that armaments could not be earmarked. Mr. Malik replied that this was true. 'Once a gun was received, it could be pointed in any direction.'

I said that even if Egypt could now be credited with having no intention at this moment to attack Israel, a feeling of military superiority might easily breed that intention. Political intentions arise out of objective political conditions, and not merely out of subjective wills and attitudes. Opportunities breed intentions. Mr. Malik indicated full assent with the view of the importance of objective facts in historic development.

4. See Doc. 65, n. 4.

I went on to say that in the case of Egypt even the subjective will to attack was not lacking. We had direct information that the idea of a war of revenge was seriously entertained in royal circles, if not as an immediate intention, at least as a plan to be fulfilled if the opportunity arose. It should be realised that the King was a definite source of political power in Egypt.

Mr. Malik said that he knew this to be true. Unfortunately the King of Egypt did not devote himself entirely to his 'domestic affairs'.

He then asked whether I thought that the United States was wholeheartedly identified with Great Britain in general Mid-Eastern strategy, and particularly in the policy of Arab rearmament.

I replied that I personally would doubt the existence of any fundamental conflict of objective between the two Western powers in the Near East. I was, however, more preoccupied with our own question. It seemed to us that the United States government shared Israel's concern for the stabilization of Arab–Israel relations by an early peace settlement, and that the United States government was wholeheartedly against a renewal of conflict in that part of the world. If this concern were the only factor in United States policy we could probably hope to win American support for our case against Arab rearmament. However, there was another element in American policy, namely: the influence of Great Britain upon American actions in the Near East. Israel was trying to persuade the United States to give precedence to the need for caution and stability, and thus to restrain Great Britain from its one-sided rearmament policy.

Mr. Malik said that he had noted the important public influences that Israel was mobilizing in the United States in this question. He then said he had noted that there had been criticism in the British Parliament of the policy of Arab rearmament. In its context this remark implied that we stood a good chance of success, for, he went on to add that it was clearly within American power to prevent Britain from embarking on a policy on behalf of which even British opinion was not unanimous. He further remarked that nothing could be worse for the Near East and for Israel than to spend all its time and money on rearmament. He said that he believed that jet planes sent to Egypt would even be manned by British pilots.

Throughout the whole of this conversation he made it clear that the limitation of Arab rearmament was something which the Soviet Union desired. I am, however, perplexed when I recall that the USSR gave us no support in the Security Council when the question of arms supplies in the Near East arose last August and was decided against us.[5]

---

5. Reference is to the Security Council's discussions in August 1949 following the conclusion of the armistice agreements between Israel and the Arab countries. The council noted with satisfaction the conclusion of the agreements and found that they superseded the provisions of the truce concluded previously by the UN and accepted by the parties, including the provisions imposing a military embargo on the parties. Israel attempted to prolong the embargo but received no

Mr. Malik then asked if he was correct in his impression that Israel was more successful now in receiving financial support from the United States. He hastened to make it clear that he meant voluntary support from the Jewish public.

I said that this impression was correct. The reason probably was that an atmosphere of potential danger now existed around the Israel cause, as a result of Arab rearmament, whereas last year there had been a feeling that all was settled and secure. The greater the impression of danger to Israel, the greater was the active sympathy and support on which we could count. This fact was always an important element in the balance of power between Israel and its adversaries.

Mr. Malik replied that there was an old Russian proverb to the effect that every cloud has a silver lining. I replied that there was an even older Hebrew saying to the same effect, namely, that sweetness comes forth out of violence.

In the final phase of the conversation Mr. Malik added that since his delegation was excluded from international organs in favour of the 'Kuomintang clique'[6] he was a little out of touch with certain matters. Had I heard any rumours or impressions about the possibility of solving the constitutional crisis in the United Nations at an early date?

I replied that Geneva was very remote from the rest of the world; and the only conversation that I had had on this subject since my return was with Mr. Trygve Lie. On that occasion I had told the secretary-general that we were following with the utmost sympathy his strenuous efforts to solve this crisis through the admission of the new and effective Chinese government, which Israel recognized as the lawful government of China. Mr. Malik said he knew and appreciated our attitude; Israel was one of the eighteen governments in the United Nations which recognized the Chinese government. The question was whether the United States sympathised with Mr. Lie's admirable approach but was unable openly to support it; or whether, on the other hand, the United States wished to prolong the present crisis and to defeat the secretary-general's effort. Mr. Malik had discussed this question with Ambassador Ernest Gross of the United States and had somewhat resented Mr. Gross' reply that the United States 'would fall in with the majority at the Security Council'. This assumption that the United States was a concept completely distinct from that of the majority, and that no relationship existed between these two concepts, was in his view far-fetched. He had told Mr. Gross: 'You have the majority in your

---

(cont.) support from the Americans and the British, while the Soviet representative stated that the USSR feared that prolongation of the embargo might lead to the continued maintenance of all the limitations and arrangements of the truce regime. In the final vote the USSR abstained (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel,* Vol. 4, Editorial Note, pp. 361–2 and No. 220, pp. 363–5).

6. That is, supporters of the nationalist regime in Taiwan. At the beginning of 1950, the USSR withdrew from most UN bodies, including the General Assembly and the Security Council, in protest over the UN decision to recognize the Republic of China (Taiwan) as the sole representative in the UN.

pocket.' I said that in the general debate during the Fourth Session, Israel had taken a clear position in favour of universality, and that the cardinal attribute of the United Nations was its ability to include different powers with divergent interests. Mr. Malik said that it was for this reason that the Soviet Union had proposed a resolution for universal admission of states. I said that it was for this reason also that Israel had voted in favour of that resolution.

Finally, he interrogated me on our relations with other Asian countries, especially Turkey and India.[7] At several points in the conversation he showed that his mind was occupied with Turkey. I replied to these questions factually, attributing our improved relations with Turkey to our success in resisting Arab arms. He said that this was a reasonable diagnosis, since 'nobody likes an ally who is not strong'. He assumed that we had better relations with India than with Pakistan. I said that this was so, although we were disappointed that Mr. Nehru had so far lacked the courage to establish normal relations with us. Mr. Malik said that this was indeed strange, since Nehru had possessed 'the courage to resist very strong pressures against the independence of Indian foreign policy'. I said that there were no conflicts and there were important affinities and similarities between the Indian and Israeli approach to the international situation. To this he nodded assent. He revealed that Ambassador Gross of the United States had tentatively raised with him the question of amending the Charter to make India a permanent member of the Security Council after its independence had lasted at least a few more years. To this Mr. Malik had replied that he hoped that India 'would indeed remain as independent as at present for the next few years'.

With the Jerusalem question no longer standing between us, this conversation, both in tone and in content, was reminiscent of the days of our most intimate cooperation with the USSR in the United Nations on our own affairs. For me the new element was his frank impression that Israel commanded power and influence in international affairs, chiefly as a result of its connections in the United States. However, in estimating the effects of its new Jerusalem policy on the general relations between Israel and the USSR, it should be borne in mind that amongst Soviet diplomats Mr. Malik has always been most prominent in his cordial attitude towards us. He was the first to request us not to allow the Jerusalem episode in the last Assembly to be regarded as a major turning-point in Soviet–Israel relations.

What I have not been able to convey in this otherwise fairly full record is a definite undercurrent of hostility which he expressed towards the Arab League, and of particular mistrust towards Egypt. It is possible that the USSR has observed a greater rapprochement between Cairo and the Western powers and is not averse to seeking revenge.

---

7. Turkey recognized Israel in March 1949 and established diplomatic relations with it soon after. India recognized Israel in September 1950, but diplomatic relations were not established until 1992.

On my way out he said that he had seen with admiration a film called *Song of the Negev* which had impressed him deeply. He hastened to add that he had visited the Stanley Cinema on Eighth Avenue for the purpose of seeing a Russian film, to which the *Song of the Negev* was attached as an additional item.

A.S. Eban

317
A. Lavrent'ev to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.3, P.5, D.4, L.1
Moscow, 22 April 1950
Secret

At the reception given in honour of Israeli Independence Day, Minister Namir told me that he wished to officially express Israel's gratitude to the Soviet government for the position it had taken on the question of Jerusalem.[1] He considered that the most rational solution to the Jerusalem question had to be one which was acceptable both to the Arab and to the Jewish population of the city.

I answered that the UN must find a solution of that sort to the question of Jerusalem.

This conversation took place in the presence of Polish Ambassador Naszkowski and Czechoslovak Ambassador Laštovička.

USSR Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
A. Lavrent'ev

1. See Doc. 313.

318
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.24, P.52, D.332, L.155
Tel Aviv, 25 April 1950

The Committee for Friendly Relations with the USSR,[1] which is under the control of the government party Mapai, has decided to organize a banquet on Thursday, 27 April on the occasion of the USSR's revised position on the Jerusalem question.[2]

All members of the legation have been invited. Sharett will be there. The committee has also decided to send me a delegation on 27 April to express its gratitude to the Soviet government. It is quite obvious that these demonstrative actions are intended to interpret Malik's letter as the Soviet Union's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Both at the banquet and at the reception of the delegation, members of the committee will make speeches which we shall have to answer.

Please send me your instructions about our participation at these functions and about the nature of our response.[3]

Ershov

319
A.Ia. Vyshinskii to P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059 OP.24, P.27, D.154, L.76
Moscow, 27 April 1950
Urgent

You should make a plausible excuse to avoid going either to the reception of the delegation or to the banquet.[1] Instruct Fedorin to receive the delegation and to go to the banquet with two members of the staff. No speeches are to be made, nothing more than a few words of thanks for their attention. You must bear in mind that we have no interest in such banquets or such gratitude.

A. Vyshinskii

Doc. 318
1. See Doc. 306, n. 8.
2. See Doc. 313.
3. See Doc. 319.

Doc. 319
1. See Doc. 318.

320
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.24, P.52, D.332, L.172.
Tel Aviv, 24 May 1950

Czechoslovak Ambassador Goldstücker has informed us that the government of Israel is trying to learn from him and from its legation in Prague about the possibility of buying arms in Czechoslovakia. The new Israeli minister, Dr. Eliashiv, who is at present director of the East European Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will be leaving for Prague at the beginning of June. He has been given full powers to engage in negotiations with the Czechoslovak government for the purchase on credit of a consignment of aircraft, tanks and artillery. Not long ago two representatives of the Skoda works visited Israel.

Ershov

321
A. Eban to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2410/18
New York, 12 June 1950

On 27 May I sent Mr. Malik a copy of our memorandum on the holy places in Jerusalem,[1] and I expressed readiness to meet with him after the government of the Soviet Union had studied our proposals. Since my letter was sent on the day after the publication of the Western Tripartite Declaration,[2] I added that I

1. The memorandum was submitted to Roger Garreau, president of the Trusteeship Council, in response to the Jerusalem Statute, approved by the council on 4 April 1950 (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 5, No. 257, pp. 351–61).
2. The Tripartite Declaration was released by the US, Britain and France on 24 May 1950. It stated that henceforth signatories would supply arms to the Middle East only for purposes of 'internal security, legitimate self-defence and to permit [the recipients] to play their part in the defence of the area as a whole'. Recipient states would have to give assurances that they 'did not intend to undertake any act of aggression against any other state'. The signatories further declared 'their deep interest ...[and] desire to promote the establishment and maintenance of peace and stability in the area and their unalterable opposition to the use of force or threat of force between any of the states in that area' (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 5, No. 248, p. 342).

was ready to discuss with him other problems relating to the Middle East. A week later, Mr. Malik invited me for a conversation, which was held on 9 June in the offices of the Soviet delegation to the UN. The counsellor of our delegation, Gideon Rafael, also took part in the conversation.

The conversation lasted for more than an hour, and even after such a long time we did not easily obtain Mr. Malik's agreement that we take our leave – the sweeping boycott of UN institutions by the Soviet representatives releases them from the burden of continuous work in the various international councils, so they are free to conduct extensive, exhaustive talks with anyone that comes by. Moreover, in the Soviet delegation, which is in a state of self-imposed siege, one senses an atmosphere of reclusion, which produces a thirst for every bit of information from the outside; this attempt to glean impressions and opinions from every source applies especially to us, since the Soviet representatives appear to believe that we maintain a ramified network of contacts and connections in the United States and are capable of plumbing the depths of [American] political reality, both overt and covert.

At the beginning of the conversation Mr. Malik offered me cordial congratulations on my appointment to another 'highly interesting and highly responsible' position.[3] After I had thanked him for his good wishes, he requested that we explain to him the significance of the Western powers' declaration, and especially the change which that declaration might foment in the Middle East.

I replied that the declaration included two main points: the first concerned the arms issue, and the second, the prevention of acts of aggression. As for the first point, the formulation of the declaration was cautious and reserved, and only reality as it unfolded would show whether the policy of unilateral armament would change in practice. We had taken note of the three principles which would guide the signatories to the declaration in responding to requests they might receive from countries in the Middle East. Our requests have always been based on the needs of 'internal security and defending the state' – yet our requests until now had not been satisfied. The third principle, according to which the contribution of each state to the defence of the entire region would be taken into account, in my view, only served to justify special arms supplies to the countries that had undertaken to assume strategic roles, i.e., Egypt, Transjordan and Iraq, which were linked to the British system of defence by special treaties. Apparently, the aim of this formulation was not necessarily to impose regional responsibility on Israel, but to justify the flow of heavy arms to Britain's allies without a commitment to similar supplies for Israel, which, as was well known, had no regional responsibility of any kind apart from its responsibility to self-defence. It was doubtful, then, whether there was any calculated intention to influence the basics of Israeli policy. In any event, that policy, which strives for peaceful relations with all peoples and countries, remained as it was; it was not amenable to changes on the basis of

3. Eban had been nominated as Israel's ambassador to the US in addition to his duties as permanent representative to the UN.

declarations by other states. In our view, the declared objective of all the powers to stabilize peace in the Middle East was in itself sufficient justification to introduce balance in arms shipments. This was the consideration on which we based our hope that the declaration will bring about a change in the armaments policy of the three powers. However, at the moment we were talking about prospects and hopes, not necessarily about a positive and definitive fact.

As for the section of the declaration that related to preserving the peace, here the powers had adopted clearer and more pungent language and we viewed positively their warning against the renewal of hostilities. True, this commitment existed in any event, since all the members of the Security Council, and not only the three signatories to the declaration, undertook last August to guarantee the maintenance of the armistice treaties and to act jointly against any violation.[4] So, the latest declaration had not created any new legal or political fact; however, a separate, solemn and forceful affirmation of the earlier commitment by three powers that have special responsibility in this region had intrinsic importance. Perhaps the pledge to act immediately and by all means against any renewal of aggression would affect our neighbours' mood and reduce their hopes of launching a second round of their offensive.

Mr. Malik listened very attentively to these remarks, nodding his head in agreement when I said that *all* the members of the Security Council were already bound by a commitment to act against violations of the armistice agreements. In reply to Mr. Malik's query, we explained that the issue in question was permits to purchase arms in the commercial market and not the right to receive arms by virtue of a political arrangement. Mr. Malik revealed that after his last conversation with me he had approached the Egyptian representative and said to him: 'I suppose you will aim your advanced British weapons northward against us'. To which the Egyptian replied: 'Northward, but not against you; we have no interest north of Palestine.' I remarked that our Egyptian colleague excelled in the flexibility and agility of his replies; there was no doubt that General Slim, chief of the British Imperial General Staff, received a completely different reply when he was in Cairo, since the Egyptians were seeking planes and artillery in large numbers.

From here we moved to the question of Jerusalem. I explained in detail the procedural situation and the improved atmosphere in the wake of the publication of our proposal. Our hope was that support would mobilize for our proposal from every corner of the General Assembly, thus putting an end to the internationalization plan. I explained in particular the Vatican's scheme to uphold the previous resolution as a sacred principle, not to be forsaken even if it remained unimplemented. Mr. Malik commented that Mr. Garreau was evidently not a pious Catholic. He was undermining the Vatican's efforts to blame Israel for not implementing internationalization. Jordan, even though

4. Reference is to the Security Council discussion in August 1949 about the validity of the armistice agreements between Israel and the Arab states (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 4, *Companion Volume*, Editorial Note, pp. 133–5; Docs. 316 and n. 5 there, and 318, no. 5).

it was silent and absent, was beginning to stand out as the major obstacle to a solution of the problem. Nevertheless, we had to bear in mind that the Vatican was a powerful enemy. Mr. Malik plied us with questions to discover whether our proposal obligated the imposition of a political regime upon any population group against its will, and asked in particular about 'the size of the population at the holy places'. He welcomed our reply – that our principal proposal did not impose UN authority on any population group, but only gave it certain assignments in connection with the holy places – with considerable satisfaction. At this stage Mr. Malik refrained from saying anything about the Soviet stand or from promising his assistance. It was only at the conclusion of our conversation that he made some cogent and incisive remarks in this regard.

Mr. Malik went on to ask our opinion about the latest memorandum issued by Mr. Trygve Lie.[5] We replied that after an initial reading we found that it indeed constituted a serious program for improving the international situation, but Mr. Lie himself admitted that a solution to the problem of Chinese representation was a preliminary and essential precondition for implementing the other articles of the program, which was based entirely on cooperation and consultation among the Great Powers. Mr. Malik then proceeded to a comprehensive and extremely interesting survey of the international situation from the Soviet point of view. Here is a summary of his presentation:

> The source of the prevailing tension in the world, in his view, is the undue nervousness of ruling circles in the United States, who look aghast and helplessly upon the social and political shocks reverberating throughout the world, and naively conclude that the sole source of this ferment is the existence of the Soviet Union – without which the world would not be shaken and agitated. This is a childish delusion. Strikes in Mexico, revolutions in China, liberation movements in Asia, uprisings in Latin America: all these events, which threaten to bring about the disintegration of existing regimes, derive from the shortcomings and deficiencies of the social structure in most countries, and only their fundamental reform can restore stability to the world. In conservative America there is no desire to grasp this simple truth, which gives rise to the need for a new and revolutionary world reform. Hence the attempt to place the blame for all these upheavals on the Soviet Union and to transform the competition between social concepts and ideas into a traditional international political clash, in which the Soviet Union is condemned as an aggressor state. However, to the Russian people that condemnation has a bizarre ring, since the fact is that America has surrounded the Soviet Union with bases and military posts, and not the other way around. Had the Soviet Union built one missile base in Mexico and another in Canada, had it sent a military delegation to Panama and set about arming all the neighbours of the United States, then it would be possible to prove that the Soviet Union harboured blatant aggressive intentions against the United States. But it is the United States that is building bases in Turkey and Iran, and encouraging anti-Russian feelings in all the countries bordering on the Soviet Union...

5. The UN secretary-general's memorandum contained proposals for settling global issues which preoccupied the international community, including disarmament, economic aid and the protection of human rights. This document was sent to all UN member states (filed in ISA under 130.02/2423/12).

> The major factor working in favour of the tendency towards coexistence is, according to Mr. Malik, the desire of the masses in every country for a peaceful life. The Russian people in particular has had its fill of war. Anyone who counts the victims of that people in the modern era alone will be appalled by the rivers of blood and waves of destruction that have inundated Russia in every generation. All the waves of barbarism have been shattered against that rock. The same Russia that saved Europe from the Tatars in the Middle Ages rescued Europe from Nazism in our days. Europe's traditional cultures continue to survive only because of these acts of salvation, which cost the Russian people enormous numbers of victims. (In his emotional survey, Mr. Malik spoke in purely nationalist terms; he did not invoke any 'dialectics' in describing the Russian mission in European history).

Mr. Malik went on to say:

> The conflict that arose between the United States and the Soviet Union after World War II is not a natural conflict, but the fruit of the efforts of Churchill, the progenitor of the Cold War. The engineering of this clash between America and Russia is an example of traditional British policy throughout the world and at all times – a policy based on the aggravation of schisms and conflicts.

To Mr. Rafael's remark that Churchill was now one of the major figures calling for an end to the Cold War, Mr. Malik replied that Churchill was by his nature a sublime demagogue; it was quite possible that he evaluated correctly the extent to which the yearning for peace had gripped the heart of Europe, and on the basis of that realistic and sober evaluation he would be capable of changing his reasoning, so that the legend of leadership and foresight attributed to him would not be proven false.

Drawing conclusions from his survey for Israel, Mr. Malik said:

> You will find it very difficult to preserve your independence and keep away from the temptations of 'total diplomacy'. The objective difficulty you face is that you are surrounded by enemies, and those enemies are hitched to the wagon of a powerful, distant entity which will not permit your region to devote itself solely to enterprises of rehabilitation and construction.

In response, we said that our only aspiration was that 'our enemies should cease to be enemies'. The establishment of peace in the Middle East would enable the entire region to embark on an independent course based on progress and cooperation, far from the tumult of the global struggle, from which we had no prospect or desire to derive benefit.

From the content and tone of this survey it appears that Mr. Malik views us as representatives of a small country that is striving earnestly for independence and a productive, peaceful life, while powerful and highly influential elements reach out from afar, in an effort to engulf the entire region in the turmoil of a great global struggle. He apparently believes in our desire to avoid becoming entangled, but doubts our ability not to do so. At the same time, in view of the manifestations of our ideological independence and our profound attachment to peace, he thinks it worthwhile to mount a calculated educational effort

to ensure that we are not 'led astray' by the fierce propaganda that prevails here concerning Soviet intentions in international politics.

As we were getting up to leave, I made one last effort to steer the conversation to a track closer to our affairs and to extract from Mr. Malik an opinion about Jerusalem. I said that we regretted that due to his absence we would not have the privilege of combating the internationalization plan together in the Trusteeship Council. He asked whether we were worried about the outcome of that political struggle. I replied that we had not yet obtained the consent of the Vatican – a most potent opponent. Mr. Malik said: that 'they are especially potent in the UN'. I said that this was indeed the case, and that it was not only with regard to Jerusalem that their power was manifested in all its strength. There was also the issue of Spain, the problem of China, the question of religious freedom in Eastern Europe – in all these the Vatican appeared as an interested party and initiator. I added: 'If we and the rest of our supporters on the Jerusalem issue stand up to them and are able to defeat them on the question of Jerusalem, that will perhaps have general political ramifications.' Following lengthy reflection, Mr. Malik said with pointed emphasis: 'Yes, yes, that is exactly why we will do everything we can to help you on the Jerusalem issue.'

322
Y. Rabinovich to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

COPY: ISA 130.11/2501/15
Jerusalem, 19 June 1950

Pursuant to my letters of 28 April 1950 and 24 May 1950,[1] I wish to inform you that on the 11th and 12th of this month I accompanied Bishop Vladimir on a tour of Haifa, Nazareth, Afula, Tiberias and Jaffa in order to arrange the matter of Russian property that is registered in the name of the Russian Orthodox Mission in Israel.

1. Invitation for Consultations in Moscow
During the tour, Vladimir informed me in the utmost secrecy that he had been summoned by the patriarch to Moscow in July for consultations on Russian property and matters relating to Palestine.[2] He thinks the patriarch's invitation is related to a general consultation of USSR representatives in the Middle East that is to be held in Moscow. He thinks he has been accorded this invitation, which he considers a great honour, due to his clear and wise stand on the question of the internationalization of Jerusalem. 'They paid no heed to the

1. Rabinovich reported on his meeting with Bishop Vladimir, who replaced Archimandrite Leonid as head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem in 1950. Vladimir took some of the credit for the Soviet reversal on the Jerusalem issue, saying that when last in Moscow he had discussed the issue with the patriarch and impressed upon him the Israeli position (both letters filed under ISA 130.11/2501/15).
2. On 31 May 1950, the USSR Council of Ministers reached a decision on Russian property in Israel (see survey Doc. 358) and the bishop was apparently summoned for consultations on this issue.

views of Archimandrite Leonid, who sought to show that the line of Jerusalem's internationalization was the right one', he said, with great self-satisfaction. Therefore, he was consulting with me and wanted to know what would we Jews suggest that Russia do in order to fend off the American campaign of friendship, which was intended to win Israel over to its side?

He also told me that the minister of religious affairs in Russia, G. Karpov,[3] had great influence in matters concerning religion and the Church in general and in the Near East in particular. Vladimir thinks that it would be useful to advise the Patriarch to ask Stalin to send Karpov to Israel in order to clear up all matters having to do with Russian property and with the Orthodox Church. In that event we should be in close contact with him and convey through him our requests to the Soviet government (for emigration, technical assistance, etc.)

2. Meeting with Archimandrite Narkissos, from the Greek Patriarchate in Jerusalem

I regret that you were unable to accept my invitation of 24 May 1950 to attend the festive reception given by Bishop Vladimir, which was attended by representatives of the Greek [Orthodox] Patriarchate from the Old City, led by Archimandrite Narkissos.

As I have already informed you, the Greeks complain about the administration of their abandoned property in Jaffa and in general about the unfair attitude towards the Greek [Orthodox] monks, who are not receiving rent for the rooms that were occupied by Jews in the courtyard of the Jaffa monastery. The same situation exists in Ramle, he says, and he has requested my assistance, just as we assisted the Russians. I promised to give him as much help as I could.

On the question of the internationalization of Jerusalem, Narkissos informed me that the Greek Patriarchate has constantly been opposed to internationalization. 'We can not live in Jerusalem and be against both the Arabs and the Jews. We were greatly disturbed when Russia suddenly declared that it favoured internationalization, but now that, thank God, it has also come out against internationalization, we can happily proceed hand in hand with our friend Bishop Vladimir.'

A week later, on a visit to Vladimir, I once again met Narkissos. This time he was pleased with the Jews and with Dr. Aharon, the head of the kibbutz at Caesarea [Sdot Yam]. He – Narkissos – concluded a contract with Dr. Aharon to lease land near Caesarea that belonged to the Greek [Orthodox] Church. As for the injustices in Jaffa and Ramle, they will soon provide me with information through Vladimir.

3. Nazareth

The representative of the Russian [Ecclesiastical] Mission and of the Russian Orthodox Society in Nazareth, Mr. Eddie Halak (a student and teacher at the

3. Karpov, in fact, served as chairman of the Council on Russian Orthodox Church Affairs.

[former] Russian seminary in Nazareth), sadly informed me that of the three Orthodox representatives in the Nazareth municipality, two had left the city and gone to Beirut. Now the Orthodox have only one representative, whereas the Muslims and the Catholics have three representatives each. He requests that we ask the relevant authorities to appoint two more representatives from the Orthodox community. I think that we should perhaps consider Eddie Halak's candidacy and appoint him to the municipality as one of the two Orthodox representatives.

4. Meeting with Rozhkov and Egorov

After I had apprised you and Mr. Tesler of the above details, I met in the evening with Mr. Rozhkov, the first secretary of the Soviet legation, and with Mr. Egorov, its consul-general. We discussed the matter of Russian property in general and of the Soviet legation in particular. In the course of a lengthy conversation, it emerged that Mr. Rozhkov plans to visit Moscow in the near future, where he will apparently participate in the consultations about which Bishop Vladimir informed me secretly.

As you know, a year ago Rozhkov asked me to inform him about the Zionist movement, the revival of Hebrew, etc. I held three lengthy conversations with him on these subjects. He took notes of the main points on the spot, and in addition asked me to commit our conversations to writing and give him a summarized version so that he could also show others the ABCs of Zionism, as he put it. I edited the material, and the result was a pamphlet of about fifty pages. Before giving Rozhkov the material I wanted to get the approval of the Jewish Agency's Information Department, but they referred me to you.

Dr. Eliashiv received the material before he left for Eastern Europe but did not have an opportunity to peruse it. By the time he returned, it was no longer relevant.

I do not think it is advisable to raise anew the question of conveying the material to Rozhkov before he leaves for Russia, but it certainly would be worthwhile to give him a brief written memorandum concerning our requests from Russia at this time together with appropriate explanations, so that he can raise the matters at the forthcoming consultation.

Naturally, I will submit this to him in a private capacity on the basis of our prior conversations, and in place of the lengthy memorandum I drew up for him.

I request an urgent decision on whether to pursue the talks in the above-mentioned direction, and if so, I ask you to give me instructions that will include the main points [to be raised] in advance of the consultation on Palestine that they intend to hold in the near future.

As you see, I am able to express our wishes and our advice informally through two channels that are represented in the country – the religious and the general [i.e., diplomatic] ones – and you have to decide whether to make use of them or not.

Yours sincerely,

Yitzhak Rabinovich

323
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059 OP.24, P.52, D.332, L.199
Tel Aviv, 19 June 1950

On 19 June I called on Sharett at his invitation. Sharett said that he had long intended to visit Moscow and had mentioned this to me on one occasion early in 1949 (reported by telegram). He had now decided to carry out this intention. He asked me to inform the Soviet government of his desire to go to Moscow if the Soviet government did not object, and was ready to receive him. Speaking of the purpose of the visit, Sharett remarked that it would help to strengthen friendly relations between Israel and the USSR.

On the other hand, a trip to Moscow would make a good impression on American Jews, who have a good deal of influence in the US. Apart from that, Sharett hoped to discuss a number of questions of practical interest to Israel with Soviet government leaders, for example, the USSR's position on the Statute for Jerusalem, the emigration of Jews from the USSR to Israel, the question of trade and credit, and so forth. Sharett would like to make this trip in August or the first half of September, before the opening of the session of the UN General Assembly. In July he would be busy with 'other matters', but if the Soviet government found it necessary to receive him in July, he would not object. He would also like to visit Leningrad and perhaps Odessa, if the Soviet government gave its consent, but now he was making only preliminary mention of a visit to those cities. He intended to bring his wife and secretary with him.

In conclusion Sharett said that he would await the Soviet government's response.[1] Namir was present at the meeting.

Ershov

1. Ershov repeated Sharett's request on 20 June, saying that he would like to receive an early reply. He later reported that he had met Sharett at a reception in the Argentine legation and that Sharett had inquired about the Soviet government's reply about his visit to Moscow. Ershov answered that no reply had been received (see AVP RF, f.059, op.24, p.52, d.332, l.202; AVP RF. f.089, op.24, p.52, d.332, l.216).

324
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

DIARY: AVP RF, F.059, OP.24, P.52, D.332, LL.204–5.
Tel Aviv, 22 June 1950

On 22 June near the village of [Maale Hahamisha][1] there was a ceremonial unveiling of a monument to the Soviet army and a tree planting. The following people were present: the acting chairman of the Knesset, Nir, ministers Remez and Shazar, numerous Knesset members, public figures and representatives of the Soviet legation and the People's Democracies. The tree-planting ceremony was opened by former minister of the interior and member of the peace committee Grünbaum, and then Professor Dinaburg spoke on behalf of the Society for Friendly Relations, and the retired Colonel Sadeh for the League for Friendly Relations. Zerubavel spoke for the Jewish Agency, and Burstein for the Histadrut (of which he is the secretary of the Central Committee). Kamini spoke for the Jewish National Fund, and Remez, the minister of communications, for the Israeli government. All the speakers expressed their gratitude to the Soviet army for the defeat of Nazi Germany and for saving the Jewish people from fascist enslavement and destruction. This was emphasized particularly strongly in Colonel Sadeh's speech. The minister of the USSR made a brief speech in reply.

It is worth noting that Zerubavel's and Remez's speeches contained indirect appeals to the Soviet Union to help Jews come to Israel (that is, to assist them in the matter of immigration).

Ershov

325
M. Namir to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL. ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 6 July 1950

Your 46.[1] I called on Shchiborin. I gave him a word-for-word translation of the government resolution as per your open 10086, and I added that the formulation itself confirmed that we were adhering strictly to a position of non-alignment, but that my government had instructed me to elaborate and clarify

Doc. 324

1. Original garbled, but the ceremony took place in the vicinity of Maale Hahamisha, a kibbutz near Jerusalem.

Doc. 325

1. A circular to Israeli missions abroad, instructing them to explain, if asked by Soviet bloc representatives, that the government's recent statement on Korea had not changed Israel's position with regard to the conflict between the two blocs. Israel continued to aspire to friendship with all nations and to support wholeheartedly the recent peace initiative of the UN secretary-general (see Sharett to Israel Missions Abroad, 3 July 1950, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 5, No. 305, pp. 420–1; for the secretary-general's peace initiative, see Doc. 321, n. 5).

this by means of a verbal explanation. I spoke pursuant to your 46. I omitted only Trygve Lie, since in the meantime he was attacked sharply and disqualified in Gromyko's statement.

Shchiborin said that the second paragraph in the Israeli resolution contradicted itself, in theory expressing loyalty to the UN Charter but in practice supporting the Security Council which was violating it, by encouraging unilateral armed intervention. I countered that our resolution did not refer to [the] formal legal dispute over who was to blame yesterday but sought the political road to restoring peace tomorrow, and noted that this road involved the cooperation of all the Great Powers. Furthermore, a single paragraph would not be read in isolation; one should read the entire text with its three interrelated paragraphs. Shchiborin asked me to translate the second paragraph again, and afterwards said that he stood by his earlier comment. After a brief exchange, which did not contribute much, he promised to convey my explanations to his superiors and I promised to convey his reaction to mine.

Namir

326
Excerpts from the Conference of Israeli Diplomatic Representatives Abroad (Tel Aviv, 17–21 July 1950)[1]

COPY: ISA 130.02/2384/15

[...]

M. Namir

The Jews in Russia constitute one per cent of the total population – that is, half of what it was, in terms of percentages, before World War II. When we left for the Soviet Union we did not know exactly what our assignments would be

---

(cont.) Following the recent events in Korea when North Korean forces invaded South Korea and approached Seoul, inflicting casualties on UN forces, the US intensified its pressure on UN member states to support the UN coalition. Against this background the government of Israel published the following statement on 2 July:

1. The government of Israel opposes and condemns aggression wherever it may occur and from whatever quarter it may emanate.
2. In fulfilment of her clear obligations under the Charter, Israel supports the Security Council in its efforts to put an end to the breach of the peace in Korea and to restore peace in that area.
3. The government of Israel hopes that the United Nations will continue its endeavours to align all the Great Powers in a common effort to safeguard the peace of the world.

Doc. 326

1. This meeting took place in Jerusalem from 17 to 21 July; the prime minister, foreign minister, chief of staff, other top-ranking officials and most Israeli representatives abroad took part. The first speech was given by Namir on 17 July 1950 at the session dedicated to reports of Israeli representatives abroad, followed by speeches of Eliashiv and Namir, respectively, at the second session — 'Israel between East and West'. The speech, entitled 'Contacts with Soviet Jewry', was given by Namir at the Eighth Session, held on 21 July 1950.

there, but consciously and subconsciously our hearts went out to Soviet Jewry. We had experienced great days marked by momentous events, which I will not recount here. Golda Meyerson already related them some time ago.

I will dwell on two or three matters during the few minutes at my disposal.

From the point of view of innate national feeling (if we are not completely wrong in our perceptions), there is basically little difference between Soviet Jewry and other Jewish communities that live a full [Jewish] life. Its outward manifestation is another matter: it blurs and erases and conceals their hidden feelings, their true sense of Jewishness. The revival of Jewish consciousness occurred in the postwar years, but its roots lie in the war era.

Jewish youth who grew up during the post-revolutionary period was educated in this spirit and did not sense any discrimination, but came face to face with the horrific reality of the Jewish problem during the war. After Stalingrad, when the Soviet army (the name 'Red Army' was changed in the meantime) began to attack the Germans and push them back towards the west and entered a town or village, the Jewish soldier witnessed how his non-Jewish comrade found his home – true, it was in very poor condition, and there were no young people, because the males had joined the army, and sometimes there were no young women, who had been mobilized for forced labour in Germany. But he usually found his aged parents and the remnants of a farm. In contrast, the Jew found – if anything at all – the graves of his parents and of his people in general in the cemetery. Furthermore, he discovered that among those who had taken part in the destruction were his fellow Soviet citizens, and even friends who were born in the same place, and with whom he had grown up.

The second theme which stirred the hearts of young people was our struggle against Britain in this country prior to the establishment of the state. The Soviet press often reported prominently and favourably on our struggle and quoted broadcasts of the underground Voice of Israel, thus opening new horizons for young people, who had already been shocked by the spectacle of the Jewish tragedy during the war years.

More recently there was the establishment of the state, the war fought by the Israel Defence Forces and its victories over the Arab states, the Soviet Union's recognition of Israel, and the opening of our legation in Moscow with all that this has since entailed.

There is good reason to believe that all these developments have engendered among the Jewish masses in the Soviet Union (to the extent that we can gauge their thoughts and feelings) fantastic notions about the strength and capability of the State of Israel – perceptions that are greatly exaggerated.

All are agreed: non-Jews and Jews, including the diplomatic corps, among them veteran diplomats in Moscow who knew Russia before the severe restrictions on contact with the local population were imposed,[2] that if Soviet

2. These laws were imposed in 1947 (see Ro'i, *Soviet Decision Making in Practice*, pp. 184, 200, 299).

Jews are permitted to immigrate to Israel, then – as the saying goes – the whole of Smolenskii Square[3] would not be big enough to hold those who would line up at our legation to get visas.

The Soviet government is not lacking in intelligence or information to the extent that it is not clearly aware of this by itself.

As for the question: Is there any prospect of Jewish immigration to Israel?

In my opinion, whoever is quick to totally rule out the possibility of Jewish immigration from the Soviet Union is blind and does not grasp developments. Apparently, only those who actually reside within Russia are capable of sensing the following:

(a) There is antisemitism at lower levels and the government wants to put an end to it. The government is not instigating it. Laws against it, legal rulings and party ideology have remained intact. But the grave facts which the Jews experienced and witnessed, were known to the government as well.

(b) After thirty years of carefully planned Soviet efforts, it suddenly appears that the Jewish problem has not been resolved – not from the internal Jewish point of view and not in terms of the attitude of non-Jews. The 'experts' who preached that there was no longer a Jewish problem, especially after the decision was made to establish something in Birobidzhan, have been proven useless. This became obvious to everyone in the streets of Moscow when the legation was opened. What happened there was unprecedented in the Soviet Union for decades: a mass Zionist demonstration – spontaneous, huge and turbulent – took place in the very heart of the capital without the government having organized it, agreed to it, or foreseen it.[4] This may have been one of the reasons, though not the only one, for the liquidation of Jewish institutions about three months later. There are other reasons. Among them I count the government's anger at the 'experts' on Jewish affairs who misled it and thwarted its purposes by accustoming it for thirty years to a 'fact' which proved overnight to be baseless. The Jewish problem is the only national problem in the Soviet Union that remains unsolved.

(c) The fact that Russian Jewry is part of an solid world Jewish bloc places it in a very complex situation *vis-à-vis* the government in this Cold War era, while the government is also in a complex situation with regard to the Jews and has not yet decided on a course.

However, there is no greater mistake than to suppose that the Soviet Union will leave this serious matter unresolved indefinitely, especially when it has had considerable experience in implementing 'radical' solutions in this area. Last year, within three or four hours, about 40,000 Greeks were evacuated from the southern borders of the Soviet Union and transferred to Kazakhstan (incidentally, the government is helping them resettle there). The same was

3. The Israeli legation was located on Glazovskii Street, near Smolenskii Square.
4. Reference is to the demonstrations and gatherings in and arround the Moscow synagogue on the Jewish High Holidays in October 1948 (see Doc. 180).

done to a smaller number of Turks.[5] We know what was done earlier to the Tatars in Crimea, who were transferred beyond the Urals, and to the Chechens and Ingush in the Caucasus.[6]

In theory, the same can be done to the Jews, but the difficulties are so great that it is doubtful that they will choose this path, of all possible options, as the exclusive solution. The government has reached the conclusion that a Jewish problem exists and that it has to be resolved. However, it is very likely that the government also grasps the fact that technically and psychologically, the solution to this problem can not resemble that of the Turks or the Greeks or the Tatars or the Chechens and Ingush. The Jews are not territorially concentrated, they number two million people, and a manhunt would have to be conducted for each and every Jew separately. Moreover, the reverberations that such an assault could have throughout the world can not be dismissed lightly.

In theory, there are three ways to resolve the Jewish question: forced territorial concentration (Birobidzhan); rapid assimilation, also by coercion and spurred on by the authorities; or emigration. There is no evidence that they will choose only one of these methods. It is very possible that they will not bypass any of these ways in order to find a rapid and comprehensive solution to the Jewish question. Therefore we should also take into account the possibility that emigration permits will be issued to a certain number of Jews if we are only fortunate enough to have favourable international conditions. In any event, this is the only positive line that can guide *us* in our policy towards the Jewish problem in the Soviet Union. Obviously, this possibility obligates us in several ways with respect to our overall policy towards the Soviet Union.

Let us not be deterred by the sober conclusion that there does not seem to be any logic here. True, they have fundamental principles from which they do not deviate, but within the framework of these principles a dialectic is at work. It operates both on the theoretical level and in day-to-day life. Just as it is 'permissible' to make excessive use of prisons, etc., in order to achieve the promised freedom of the future; and in order to ensure total satiety, many suffer from hunger and destitution for long years; and to achieve true international fraternity it is possible to foment hatred and chauvinism of a kind that has few parallels in our world, and if for the sake of liberated labour the most onerous work methods are made sacrosanct; and if for the sake of peace it is possible to wage war – there is also no ruling out the 'dialectical' possibility of emigration for the sake of anti-Zionism or in the course of an anti-Zionist campaign.

---

5. In 1949 about 37,000 Greeks and 1,700 Turks were forcibly removed from the Black Sea coast and relocated in Central Asia and Kazakhstan (see Zemskov, 'Massovoe osvobozhdenie spetsposelentsev i ssyl'nykh', p. 6).
6. For the Crimean Tatars and deportation, see Doc. 234, n. 2. In February 1944 the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic in the Northern Caucasus was abolished and its population deported to Central Asia and Kazakhstan for alleged treason and collaboration with the Nazis.

Sh. Eliashiv
Dr. Eliashiv is concerned that even if everyone agrees to a policy of non-alignment, we are in fact not maintaining it properly, since we are strongly inclined to the West and this defeats the principle of our policy. To this must be added the pressure that the West exerts on us, and the fact is that for us the Western countries are not just one half of the world balanced against the other half. We do *not* maintain a true balance between the halves. True, every so often we are forced to become aware of the events around us and to return to the middle road by the fact that in the Eastern bloc a large number of Jews serve as hostages. As long as we are careful not to cross the boundary line, we will be able to go on maintaining ties with the Jews of the East and carrying out our principal mission there: getting Jews out. It is impossible to carry on Jewish public activity in the East, and once we have been able to extract the maximum number of immigrants we will no longer be able to operate in the Eastern bloc countries.

In order to continue getting Jews out, it is incumbent upon us to make every effort and suffer every sacrifice, at the expense of our relations with the West. We must bear in mind that the East is far more sensitive than the West to what is said and done concerning the rivalry between the two blocs. Therefore, the measure of non-alignment which we may find fair, does not always seem so to them. No one in Eastern Europe imagines that we will ever – by peaceful constitutional means – become a People's Democracy. They do not expect this, nor do they ask us to behave as though we were about to change our system radically overnight; but they would like to be certain that we do not become a blind tool against them in the hands of the West. This should be emphasized all the more in view of the fact that what we are asking of them – the exit of Jewish citizens – is, from their point of view an enormous and far-reaching request. It is essential, therefore, to enable Israel's diplomatic representatives in the East to sit down with the rulers and negotiate with them for the exit of Jews. From this point of view, every offensive remark that is uttered by the foreign minister and published in the press has a most negative effect. If the possibility arises of purchasing goods in the East (arms, etc.), we should try to buy there even if the terms are worse than those in Western markets. Naturally, we should not maintain a ridiculously mechanical balance, but if it is possible to do business in the East, and if we assume a commitment towards them, we should make every effort to uphold it, because they are highly sensitive on the issue of 'are you with us or against us?'.

M. Namir
Namir is convinced that the Russians are demanding no more of us than neutrality and an independent evaluation of their actions, and that if we were to display an inclination to become satellites like the People's Democracies this would not be desirable to the Soviet Union. The reason for this lies in Soviet calculations and considerations; in the present circumstances, as the Russians view it, Israel can either serve as an actual Western base or be free and not

supply bases. Given the current balance of forces, if we turn to the East, then the West will eliminate us in terms of political independence and turn our country into its base. This being the case, Israeli neutrality and denial of bases to the West are the maximum to which the Russians can aspire at this time. Therefore, from all points of view and not only because of the immigration from the East, non-alignment is the right line to take towards both the West and the East.

We are worth something in Western eyes, and their leaders take us into account as long as we are independent and free to follow our inclinations. The same holds for the East. The world will hold in esteem only those who have a choice, not those who have only a single option. This principle obligates Israel to make every effort to prevent a situation in which the West forms the impression that we have terminated our affairs in the East, and to be extremely careful to maintain a neutral policy. Furthermore, it is incumbent upon us to try to make this neutrality manifest and to display it at every appropriate opportunity.

Our experience with the Soviet Union shows that every minor offense on our part towards the East generates powerful reverberations and disrupts our normal relations with them. Concerning issues which are critical in international policy and constitute a major point of contention between East and West, the Russians are satisfied with our position.

[...]

Contacts with Soviet Jewry

Most of what the foreign minister said in his address does not yet have practical significance where the Soviet Union is concerned. The legation's major occupation there is to observe and try to discern what is happening all around; it has exactly the same feeling as thousands of Jews who look towards it and observe it in terrible, mute silence. We will be doing an injustice to ourselves and to the entire Jewish people if we reconcile ourselves to the thought that Russian Jewry is no more.

There is no law that forbids Soviet citizens from speaking with foreigners or even with foreign diplomats. But the fact is that very few Soviet citizens will jeopardize themselves and meet publicly with a foreigner, least of all with a diplomat. In the last three years the campaign to isolate diplomats completely from contact with local residents has been successful. From the point of view of the conditions which govern our contacts, legation members can meet only with Russians from the Foreign Ministry, with Russians from the Ministry of Foreign Trade and the Ministry of Defence; with officials of VOKS (the organization for foreign cultural ties), and with Russians serving within the legation itself, or in chance encounters with people on the street, in shops, at the theatre or concerts.

However, the fact is that of all the legations in Moscow we are the only one that has breached – not intentionally, but in practice – the rules of behaviour for accepted contact between a foreign legation and local residents, by virtue

of our being Jews. We are the only legation towards which two million citizens feel a special relationship. For example, it is enough for one of our staff to travel on the metro or the bus or train, and by chance, or not by chance, the [Hebrew] newspapers *Davar hashavua* or *Haaretz* stick out of his pocket – it is almost certain that the trip will end at one of the stations in a conversation with a Jew who is magically attracted to those square letters. There is no cause to complain about our meagre contacts with local residents, because relative to others, our contacts are considerable and significant. Our legation is also visited by local residents, albeit in far fewer numbers during the second year than in the first. They come in to speak their mind, to look and listen. Every such visit is not only a tremendous individual experience for our guest and for us, but above all an opportunity to obtain important information and to send regards to many thousands of Jews. Take our visit to the synagogue, in all its various aspects – the story of that visit was conveyed in various renditions from one person to another throughout the entire Jewish community of the Soviet Union.

The very existence of our legation – the building, the car, the flag, the staff, the language – in that country is a huge 'Zionist provocation'.

Pitting Soviet Jewry against World Jewry

If a third world war, which mankind can apparently expect, is delayed and does not break out in the near future, there is hope that part of Soviet Jewry will be saved by immigration to Israel, but if the disastrous war erupts soon, we will have to take into account very gloomy prospects, and we can also consider the possibility of a completely new Jewish policy.

The entire episode of persecution and oppression during 1949 lacked any element of antisemitism, [the practice of] which would have contradicted the very essence of the regime and its principles. The only intent was to rapidly suppress turbulent Jewish national sentiment, which had been aroused in the wake of the Nazi tragedy, on the one hand, and the establishment of Israel, on the other. As a result, the government apparently chose the path of intimidation and vilification: liquidation of the Jewish institutions of Yiddish culture; imprisonment of Jewish activists and intellectuals; dismissals from senior positions; denunciation of Jews as cosmopolitans; sporadic deportation of Jews on various specific charges; making foreign Jews objects of hatred as Wall Street leeches and avaricious businessmen or their devoted servants and cosmopolitan followers (caricatures of Bernard Baruch, Leon Blum, Albert Einstein, etc; sometimes the Christian André Gide is added to the list, but it is not difficult to imagine the phonetic impact on the Russian reader of the addition of this name to the long list of names of Jewish 'traitors');[7] vilification of the State of Israel for having sold out or being ready to sell out to the 'warmongering' camp; for preparing an aggressive alliance with Abdallah, the British agent; for being an economic pawn in the Marshall Plan; for calling

7. 'Zhid', a derogatory appellation for Jew in Russian, is pronounced like the French 'Gide'.

upon American capitalists to come and fawn over it; for placing its young army under the command of American generals; for imposing a saliently reactionary domestic policy; for persecuting its Arab citizens, who are protesting their unemployment and the loss of their civil rights; and more.

After a year of this coordinated campaign, the government apparently concluded that its goal of intimidation had been achieved and that Jewish 'bourgeois nationalism' had retreated and gone back into its old shell. Jews found that 'belonging' to the State of Israel – in contrast to Erenburg's artificial formula of sympathy for Israel, on the one hand, and hatred of Zion, on the other – was not merely useless, but positively harmful. It is therefore possible, the government believes, to relax the crude chauvinistic Russian offensive, which generates antisemitic passions against Jews as Jews, and return to some of the old Soviet formulations about *ravnopravie*,[8] or to go even farther. All the more so, when a peripheral goal, though a very practical one, was achieved in the meantime: freeing the state apparatus from some of the oppressive surplus of Jewish influence in major areas of Soviet life.

In the event of a third world war in the near future, the possibility thus exists of preparing public opinion for the mobilization of Soviet Jewry against their 'traitorous mercenary brethren across the border'. In other words, they will not put an end to Soviet Jewry but will revive and organize it as a national unit, perhaps even within the framework of a Soviet Jewish army, and turn it against 'Western' Jews.

Erenburg asserted in December 1948 that 'we and you', meaning Soviet Jewry and Jews elsewhere, 'are liable to fight each other across the two sides of the barricade'. We should, therefore, view as a realistic possibility the formation of Jewish army battalions in the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies, perhaps led by the two remaining survivors – who for some reason are considered the semi-official representatives of Soviet Jewry – Ilya Erenburg and David Zaslavskii, and perhaps Itzik Fefer, Peretz Markish and David Bergelson and others will also be returned from oblivion in order to wage 'the war of the Jews'. We recall how, during the war against Hitler, the Soviet Union made full use for Jewish purposes of the late Mikhoels and of Itzik Fefer not only within, and indeed not even mainly within the Soviet Union, but overseas.

In terms of loyalty to the Soviet Union and its regime, the various [Soviet] peoples are divided into four categories:

Highest on the scale of both lineage and loyalty is the Great Russian nation, which inhabits Russia proper, the only country in which the Bolshevik regime has not faced any undue complications since its establishment.

The Mongolian tribes, a few other backward tribes, and the Ukraine are considered to be the second most loyal group.

At the third level of loyalty are the Muslim states. Their loyalty is not absolutely certain because their sacred religious centre is beyond the sphere

8. Civil equality.

of the Soviet Union and its civilization – Persia and the Arab lands – the more so since in the last war at least two groups of Muslims collaborated with the Germans, one in the Caucasus and the other in Crimea, and their republic was liquidated at the end of the war.

At the lowest level are the Greeks, the Turks and the Jews. As for the Jews, there is one critically important fact which can not be glossed over in Soviet or Jewish history: a large body of Jews, between 150,000 to 200,000 refugees from Poland who were spared physical annihilation by Hitler thanks to the Soviet government, lived and worked for a number of years in the Soviet Union. But all these Jews, with the exception of perhaps one per cent, when given the free choice of returning to Poland or remaining in the Soviet Union, chose Poland. This sole experiment in thirty-three years of large-scale free migration showed the authorities that Jewish loyalty is very shaky, and the government extrapolated on its resulting suspiciousness to include all Soviet Jews. The Turks and Greeks were not very numerous and it was not difficult to do to them now what was done to the Tatars in Crimea at the end of the war. As for the Jews – their numbers, their dispersal and their ties – the issue is far more complicated. Therefore it is possible that with respect to the Jews – as in the case, for example, of the policy towards Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, the large Muslim republics – the Soviet Union will employ opposite, more positive measures than they did in relation to the Greeks and the Turks, and will set them [the Jews] up as an organized competing national force.

Arrests and Deportations

According to fragmentary reports, Prisoners of Zion who have completed their prison terms have been deported once more, albeit to less severe sites. New arrests have been made for espousing Zionism in the western areas of the Soviet Union, following their annexation to the USSR more than ten years ago, and again in 1949–50.

In the matter of the deportations, we should distinguish between rumour and fact. We heard a personal testimony from a member of Hashomer Hatsair who claimed that there had been mass deportations from Moldavia to Siberia. After looking into the matter, I discovered that the description was not accurate. The truth is that there were many deportations, but not on a mass scale. They were based on accusations of individuals of new and old transgressions, true and imagined, but we also have mass Jewish deportations, but Jews were not deported simply because they were Jews.[9] There is also a sense that sometimes the Jews' fear is exaggerated. For example, there is no proof that people who contacted us or who visited the legation were punished.[10] But the fact is that the number of visits is constantly declining, approaching the zero mark, while the [average] age of the visitors is constantly increasing.

9. There are, in fact, no known cases of mass deportations of entire communities of Jews.
10. In fact, visitors to the legation *were* punished by the authorities (see Ro'i, *Soviet Decision Making in Practice*, pp. 200–3).

327
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.24, P.52, D.332, L.222
Tel Aviv, 18 July 1950

On 18 July I received the following letter from Sharett:

> I have the honour to confirm that I have received your letter of 13 July 1950, with the enclosure containing threats.[1] I promptly passed the note to the organization responsible for investigation. The preliminary inquiry suggests that we are dealing here with an unbalanced individual. However, in order to avert any possible incidents, the department concerned has been ordered to increase the level of security vigilance with regard to the USSR legation.
>
> Ershov

328
G. Rafael to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 93.03/71/19
New York, 31 August 1950

A few days after Mr. Eban's return to the United States, Mr. Malik, whom I met at a reception, expressed his desire to meet with us for an exchange of views on the situation. On 23 August I accompanied Mr. Eban when he called on Mr. Malik at his office. Mr. Soldatov, the chief advisor of the Soviet legation, took part in the conversation.

Immediately after the traditional questions about everyone's health and the weather, Mr. Malik asked about the political climate in the Middle East in light of recent changes in the international atmosphere. Mr. Eban replied by conveying his impressions of Israel, noting the astonishing achievements which had taken place since his last visit. He mentioned his tour of Eilat and related that on the day of his visit three new projects had been inaugurated: the opening of the telephone link between the Red Sea and the centre of Israel, the laying

1. On 11 July 1950 the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv received a letter in Hebrew which said: 'Hereby a first warning is given to the Soviet legation in Israel. If Russia and its satellites do not permit their Jews to emigrate to Israel and continue to intervene in Israel's domestic affairs through local communists, the legation will be blown up. Down with despotic Russia! Shame on fascist-communist Stalin! Long live democracy! [signed] Free Union of Israel.' On the same day, Ershov transmitted the text of the letter to Moscow and asked for instructions. Ershov interpreted this letter as a direct result of demonstrations and meetings arranged by the Israeli Communist Party on 7 and 8 July against US aggression in Korea and the Israeli government's support for the UN position on Korea (see AVP RF, f.059, op.24, p.52, d.332, l.220).

of a water pipeline, and the laying of a cornerstone for fifty houses. Malik interrupted Mr. Eban's colourful description, saying: 'I heard that you have considerably increased your population.' When we responded by saying that Israel's population stood at a million and a quarter he expressed his amazement openly, noting that this was undoubtedly a tremendous achievement. He added that labour and vision could transform a wasteland into a thriving oasis. The critical prerequisite was the workers' dedication.

Mr. Malik repeated his question about the situation in the Middle East. He wanted to know who now wielded greater influence in the region: the British or the Americans? We replied that the situation differed from one country to the next. When Mr. Eban intimated that there were even countries, such as Egypt, where a rivalry of interests existed between the United States and Britain, Mr. Malik pretended not to believe this was possible. After Mr. Eban concluded his survey of the dominant interests in the various Arab states, I remarked, 'and in Israel, the dominant influence is Israeli'. Malik hesitated momentarily, and said, 'that could be'. He was especially interested in whether the British were still supplying weapons to the Arabs. He also wanted to know our opinion about Turkey's candidacy for the Security Council.[1] Mr. Eban noted that given our friendly relations with Turkey, the first Muslim country to recognize Israel, we would support its aspiration to represent the Middle East in the Security Council.

Mr. Malik took the occasion to say, with a smile, that we were undoubtedly taking an interest in Article 20 of the [General] Assembly agenda – the question of Jerusalem. Mr. Eban described for him the character of present-day Jerusalem, where life had completely returned to normal. Malik remarked that he was aware of this. He did not repeat what he had said in our previous conversation: that the Soviet Union would support us on the Jerusalem issue.[2] He may have refrained from touching upon the issues before the Assembly, in order not to give us the clear impression that the Soviet Union would participate in the Assembly.

From here Mr. Malik moved on to relations between Islam and the Vatican, noting that recently there had been a tendency towards a rapprochement. Mr. Eban explained that from a theological point of view it was unlikely that the Vatican and Islam should be able to reach an understanding. However, the Vatican apparently saw in Islam a factor which it could enlist against the 'forces of darkness', among which Israel had an honourable place. In general, the Vatican was thinking in terms of confrontation, and found support among the Arabs for that frame of mind. Malik nodded his head vigorously in affirmation.

Malik then turned to the subject of the Arab refugees. He related that [UN officials] Protitch and Cordier had noted that the condition of the refugees was

---

1. Turkey aspired to the Security Council seat reserved for a Middle East country that was about to be vacated by the incumbent, Lebanon. Israel actively supported Turkey's candidacy (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 5, No. 371, p. 521; see also Doc. 332).
2. See Doc. 321.

better than that of Arabs who resided on their own land. He spoke mockingly of the refugee problem as something artificial, noting that the Arabs were not interested in resolving it. He agreed, laughing, to my comment that for an Arab the status of refugee actually constituted social and economic advancement. He inquired about the use of UN aid funds, saying that most of the money probably 'stuck' to the palms of Arab politicians.

The conversation then focused on the situation at the UN. Mr. Eban said that in our view the problem of China was the major obstacle faced by the UN. We had hoped that this problem would be resolved with the return of the Soviet representative to the Security Council. Malik replied that in the current situation no quick solution should be expected. The president of the United States and the State Department could not take a clear stand on this issue before the elections, for fear of the Republicans. He asked our opinion about the prospects of the Democratic Party in the next congressional elections. We replied that much depended on developments in Korea, but now apparently the president's position was stronger and had popular support.

As to our question whether he thought a solution could be found to the problem of China and the general crisis within the structure of the Assembly, in which non-aligned states had greater weight, Malik replied that in his view nothing should be expected from the Assembly, as two-thirds of its members were under the thumb of the United States. As proof of this, he noted that just a few weeks ago the American Senate had adopted a resolution to terminate all Marshall Plan aid to countries that did not cooperate with the United States on the Korean issue. Sixteen countries were connected to the Marshall Plan, and a further twenty-one Latin American countries were 'caught in the tentacles of the northern octopus'. These two blocs alone constituted a two-thirds majority. Therefore, he continued, the non-aligned states could not affect the course of events at the Assembly, which produced only grievances and clarified nothing.

To our comment that the Assembly's agenda contained an interesting point that could dissipate tension, namely Trygve Lie's twenty-year plan,[3] Malik testily dismissed this outright and disparagingly as an American plan. When we expressed our doubts about this, noting that one of the points in the program supported the representation of Communist China at the UN, Malik did not budge from his position, saying that the secretary-general's memorandum had been written by Cordier and Feller, who followed the orders of the State Department. He added that those two constituted the general command, and that Trygve Lie implemented its line of thought. The United States also controlled the Security Council through the automatic majority it commanded. Malik spoke contemptuously and mockingly about [Warren] Austin's performance. He and Soldatov amused themselves by exchanging epithets in Russian about this, Soldatov trying unskilfully to translate them into English.

---

3. See Doc. 321, n. 5.

Malik said pointedly that even though the [Security] Council in its present state could not help settle the Korean issue peacefully, it was important that its members now had the opportunity to listen to the views of the other side, which had not been heard when America hitched the council to its wagon.[4] Speaking of the US attitude in the Security Council, Malik said that the Americans did not understand the problem of the peoples of Asia, where a national revolution and a war of liberation from social oppression were under way. The Americans did not grasp the scale of the changes which had taken place in our generation. The Korean people was fighting for its independence in the same spirit with which Israel defended itself in its war of independence. Just as the forces of Lebanon and Egypt could not subdue us because they did not know what they were fighting for, neither did the soldiers of [South Korean President] Syngman Rhee and the Americans who were being sent to their slaughter know why they were at war. Like Israel in its war and like the Soviet Union in its patriotic war against fascism, the forces of the north were fighting for the sacred cause of independence. Malik revealed his knowledge of the geography of Israel which he had acquired in Paris during the Security Council's deliberations on implementing the resolution of 4 November 1948, and inquired about Beersheba and Faluja,[5] whose fate had been steeped in controversy at that time.

When Eban conveyed to Malik the minister's greetings and said he would attend the Assembly, Malik remarked: 'This is the sixth foreign minister who has announced his arrival.' When we asked whether we could also expect the presence of Mr. Vyshinskii, Malik hesitated briefly, and said: 'Actually, I have not yet received any report about his attendance or about the dispatch of the Soviet delegation in general.'

Several impressions from this meeting deserve noting:

(a) Malik was cordial throughout the conversation.

(b) He reacted enthusiastically to our achievements at home.

(c) Even though the conversation also dwelt on the Korean question, Malik refrained from making any comment, direct or indirect, about Israel's stand on this issue.

(d) Malik, usually effusively humorous, gave the impression this time of someone who was tired, depressed and worried.

(e) During the conversation we gained the impression that the Soviet Union's attitude towards the UN had not yet been finally determined, and it appeared that in the wake of the disappointment it had incurred, it was now re-examining its attitude towards the UN.

---

4. After a seven-month boycott (see Doc. 316, n. 6), Malik informed the Security Council he intended to take over the presidency of this body in August in accordance with the rotating chairmanship. He proposed placing the issues of Chinese representation at the UN and the cease-fire in Korea on the agenda for the first meetings of the Security Council following rotation.
5. See Doc. 201, and n. 4 there.

329
Excerpts from a Letter of the East European Division of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Legations in Eastern Europe

COPY: ISA 93.03/3043/3
Tel Aviv, 1 September 1950

[...]
A. *Immigration*
It is too early to shout hosannas, because this section refers just to the immigration of individuals and to the description of the interesting and characteristic circumstances in which they succeeded in receiving permission to leave.

A Jew from Venezuela, who came to Israel about four months ago in order to deal from here with the emigration of his sister from the Soviet Union, sent Stalin a letter requesting that his sister be permitted to join him. The sister was summoned by the local authorities and told that Stalin had acceded to her brother's request and would permit her to go to Israel. She was promised a passport within a few weeks.

A second case. A (Christian) woman whose husband is in Israel asked Stalin for a visa to Israel. She was issued a passport and asked to produce a certificate stating that her husband wanted her to come to Israel, and a second certificate stating that she was assured an entry permit. In a third case, a woman – a Soviet citizen – received permission to proceed from Poland to Israel after the Soviet embassy in Warsaw extended the validity of her passport to Israel, as well.

Naturally, no far-reaching conclusions should be drawn from these cases, which all occurred in the last month.

[...]

330
M. Namir to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 5 September 1950

(a) Secret, to the [Foreign] Minister. Odessa.[1] It is estimated that there are two hundred thousand Jews [in Odessa], constituting about a third of the total population. The streets are filled with masses of Jews, far above their proportion in the population. Their vitality and dynamism, and their resolve –

1. For more about Namir's visit to Odessa, see Namir, *Shlihut beMoskva*, pp. 212–13.

characteristic of the Jews of old Moldovanka[2] – create a powerful impression. In contrast to Moscow, one also hears Yiddish in the streets. About 30 per cent of [the Jews] resided in Odessa before the war; the rest are refugees who arrived from elsewhere, especially from the smaller towns and villages, which have been almost emptied of Jews who feared isolation and antisemitism. In the city, too, relations with the non-Jews are not friendly, but large numbers [of Jews] and the vague memories of traditional Jewish heroism in Odessa reinforce their sense of security, while the material conditions of life in this coastal city are slightly better than elsewhere. All these, taken together, exert a strong attraction. Nevertheless, their mood is despondent and they have numerous worries. Though the anti-cosmopolitan incitement has abated, the Jews say they continue to be excluded from administrative posts and they are certain that this is not due to the arbitrariness of local officials but is an order from above. The great Brodsky Synagogue serves as a government archive and only one not very large synagogue remains on Pushkin Street. Recently the authorities have given notice that they intend transferring it to a run-down building on a remote street, and the Jews are very bitter about this. The cemetery has also been preserved, but no other Jewish institutions exist. The Jews are afraid to talk about Zionism and Israel. Outwardly they ignore us, but many listen ardently to broadcasts from Israel and in their hearts maintain a deep attachment to it. Fear of war runs high, and their anxiety for their own fate and for the fate of Israel is immeasurably profound.

[...][3]

Namir

331
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.24, P.52, D.332, LL.270–4
Tel Aviv, 7 September 1950

Riftin informed me that on 1 September there was a session of the [Knesset] Foreign Affairs Committee. The position of the Israeli delegation at the Fifth Session of the UN Assembly[1] and Sharett's report on the question of the immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel were discussed.

Doc. 330

2. One of the most picturesque neighbourhoods of Odessa, with a large Jewish population.
3. The second and third paragraphs, concerning encounters of a personal nature in Odessa, have been omitted.

Doc. 331

1. The Fifth Session of the UN General Assembly opened on 22 September 1950.

Speaking about the first question, Sharett added to what he and Eban had told the previous session of the committee (which we have already reported) as follows:

1. Discussion at this session of the Statute for Jerusalem may possibly be postponed at the suggestion of the US. The government of Israel has not yet taken a decision whether to support or oppose this proposal – there are pros and cons for both positions.

2. On the initiative of some Arab countries, the agenda includes the question of Arab refugees, but one does not detect in their present position the insistence with which they dealt with this question previously. On the contrary, a certain moderation can be seen. The Israeli delegation may introduce a proposal to settle the refugees in Arab countries and may announce Israel's consent to offer assistance to this plan in the form of material goods.

3. For the presidency of the session the representatives of Pakistan and Iran will be proposed. The Arab countries will support the former and Israel the latter.[2]

4. For the Security Council, Holland and Brazil are the candidates to replace Norway and Cuba. Israel will vote with the majority at the session.

5. The Israeli delegation will support the decision of the International Court that when new members are elected to the UN, the opinion of the Security Council must be taken into account.

6. The International Court is in favour of inviting the representatives of Romania and Hungary to discuss the question of protecting civil rights. Because of the arrest of the Zionist leaders in Romania,[3] the Israeli delegation will vote with the majority at the session.

7. On the question of Eritrea the Israeli delegation will support the proposal put forward by Burma in the committee on a constitution for Eritrea and for a federal union of Eritrea with Ethiopia.[4]

8. Regarding Spain, Israel is under pressure from Latin American states, which link this question to that of Jerusalem. Sharett believes that these countries will be satisfied if the Israeli delegation abstains from voting.[5]

After Sharett, Harari spoke for the Progressive Party, Kook for Herut and Riftin for Mapam. At the suggestion of Aharonovich, chairman of the committee and secretary-general of Mapai, a decision was taken: the committee heard Sharett's report on the position of the Israeli delegation at the Fifth Session of the UN Assembly and entrusted him to inform the government about the discussion of this question in the Foreign Affairs Committee. It was also decided that the committee should discuss the Israeli government's general policy on East–West relations.

2. The Iranian representative, Nasrollah Entezam, was elected president of the session.
3. See Doc. 230.
4. See Doc. 306, n. 17.
5. The Latin American countries proposed rescinding all UN resolutions imposing restrictions on Franco's Spain. The matter was raised again in a meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 10 September and it was resolved that Israel would object to any attempt to end the international isolation of Spain (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 5, No. 377, p. 533).

On the second question, about the immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel, Sharett remarked that he would not say all there was to say and spoke as follows: Until Gromyko's speech in November 1947, he (Sharett) had thought that the USSR regarded the Zionist movement as a tool of imperialism, but after that speech he had begun to think that, in making such an important decision, the Soviet Union had analyzed thoroughly all the issues arising from the formation of the Jewish state. He would like to have confirmation of this. He had once talked about it to Vyshinskii, who answered that he could not give his government's point of view, and that – personally speaking – he had not thought about the consequences. He had also talked to Gromyko and Ershov, but had not received a proper reply. Then he spoke to Malik, to whom he put the question bluntly: could the USSR allow 50,000–100,000 Soviet Jews to immigrate to Israel? Malik answered with a joke: What would America say to the arrival of such a large group of Soviet citizens in Israel? Sharett told him that it would establish a living link between Israel and the Soviet Union and would make a *rapprochement* between Israel and the US more difficult.

Meanwhile, Sharett went on, the situation of the Jews in the USSR was very difficult. The Jews were the only nation affected by the campaign against cosmopolitanism. The USSR did not trust its Jews: in leading institutions, such as the Council of Ministers, the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of State Security and the Ministry of Foreign Trade there were very few Jews, and these were crypto-Jews, i.e., they did not admit to being Jewish. The formation of the State of Israel had roused great excitement among Soviet Jews and brought into the open their desire to immigrate to Israel.

Sharett advised against any public agitation in Israel for the emigration of Soviet Jews since this would lead to a deterioration of the situation of the Jews in the USSR. He also objected to the proposal that the Knesset make a special declaration on this matter. He said that under present circumstances the most expedient move would be to start negotiations with the Soviet government, and he added that the government of Israel would try to do so.[6]

---

6. According to Sharett's statement, as recorded in the minutes of the Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, in the past Soviet hostility to the Zionist enterprise had resulted from a vision of Zionism as an instrument of imperialism in the international arena and as a subversive factor in the domestic arena. Since isolation of the Soviet population from the outside world was a basic Soviet principle, it could not assent to the association of any segment of its population with an entity located outside Soviet borders. With the change in its position regarding Zionism in 1947, Sharett thought the Soviets would also change their attitude towards the second issue, but this had not happened. Sharett had told Vyshinskii that recognition of Israel as an independent state implied concurrence with the consequences of this decision, namely the return of the people of Israel to its land. Vyshinskii answered: 'You have raised an important question; however, I cannot give you the response of my government, nor what its goal was in taking this crucial decision. Personally, I can say to you that I have not taken these consequences into consideration.'

   Referring to the current situation of the Jews in the USSR, Sharett depicted it as the most tragic period in their history since 1917 and enumerated four factors: (1) antisemitism in the USSR and the regime's use of it; (2) fear of a planned attack by the regime on the Jewish population which might be followed by deportations, as in the case of the Volga Germans and the Crimean Tatars;

Chairman of the committee Aharonovich supported Sharett on this point and said that a 'cold war' against the USSR over this issue could only harm the interests of the state.[7]

Sharett was asked whether the USSR's attitude to Israel had changed after the Israeli government's decision on the Korean question, to which he replied that there had been no change. Not long ago Eban had spoken to Malik, and their conversation had been very cordial;[8] Malik did not mention the Korean question, listened attentively to what Eban had to say, and asked about the domestic structure of the Israeli state.

At this point the session of the committee came to an end. The question of the immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel was postponed until the next meeting.

Ershov

332
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – W. Eytan (Tel Aviv, 23 September 1950)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.24, P.52, D.332, LL.279–82

On 22 September I called on Eytan, director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at his request. He said that he had to inform me about the following three issues connected with the work of the Fifth Session of the UN Assembly:

1) The Israeli delegation to this session would vote for the election of Turkey to the Security Council.[1] Because Israel's position on this differed from that of the USSR, which would probably vote against Turkey's candidacy, it was necessary to explain that the reason why Israel would vote for Turkey was solely to deprive the Arab League of its monopoly on the right to represent the countries of the Middle East in the Security Council. According to Eytan, this

---

Doc. 331

(cont). (3) a process of dismissing Jews from the sciences, arts and free professions, and their replacement by indigenous educated persons in the various regions of the country; (4) the regime's assessment of the impact of the establishment of the State of Israel on the mentality of Soviet Jews.

Sharett believed that Israel had to persist in negotiating with the Soviet government regarding the emigration of Soviet Jews and he opposed public campaigns on this issue. However, this did not exclude public debate, passing resolutions or writing on the subject (see minutes, ISA 60/1762/5, pp. 20–5).

7. Aharonovich hoped that if the gates of the USSR were opened, the majority of its Jewish population would leave for Israel. However, he believed that public campaigns for Jewish emigration from the USSR at this time would endanger the situation of the Jews there and lead to harmful propaganda against the USSR in a divided world. Therefore, diplomatic negotiations should be continued (ISA 60/1762/5, pp. 28–9).
8. See Doc. 328.

Doc. 332

1. See Doc. 328 and n. 1 there.

would create a precedent, and would allow Israel to propose its candidacy for the Security Council at some future date.

2) The Israeli government and its delegation to the session had done everything possible to support the proposal to invite representatives of the People's Republic of China to be present. Some time ago the US State Department had sent a note to many governments, in which it said that the American government would object to inviting representatives of China to the session and called on other governments to support the US on this. The Israeli government had replied that it did not share this point of view and, following the principle of the independence of its foreign policy, would vote for the invitation to China. And in fact, according to Eytan, the Israeli delegation had voted 'for'.[2]

3) The Israeli delegation would oppose Syria's proposal to give the Arab League the right to send its representatives to the UN session as observers. Since the US State Department had taken a favourable view of this proposal, the government of Israel has lodged a protest with it. The State Department answered that Israel's arguments on this question would be studied, but since the State Department had earlier informed a number of governments of its positive attitude to the Syrian proposal, the government of Israel was not pinning any hopes on a change in the US position on this point.

Remarking that the Arab League was not a regional organization with a right to represent Middle East countries at sessions of the UN according to Article 52 of the UN Charter, Eytan handed me the following *aide-mémoire*:

> The government of Israel sets out below its opinion of point 59 of the provisional agenda for the Fifth Session of the Assembly of the United Nations, which is entitled 'Invitation to the Arab League to attend the sessions of the General Assembly on a regular basis'.
>
> 1. Even according to its statute the Arab League is not a body in which all the countries of the Middle East can take part, but is a wholly ethnic organization, strictly limited to Arab states.
>
> 2. In contrast to the custom of contemporary international organizations, the meetings of the Arab League are held behind closed doors, their reports remain secret, and not all their decisions are published. A representative of the United Nations has never been invited to be present as an observer at any session of the league.
>
> 3. Far from being a factor for peace in the Middle East, the Arab League has been an instigator and the main organizer of the aggressive Arab war against Israel. After the fighting had ended, the Arab League was the main obstacle to the efforts undertaken by the UN and Israel to achieve a peaceful settlement between Israel and the Arab states.
>
> For all these reasons, the government of Israel considers that the Arab League can not be considered a regional organization as envisaged by Article 52 of the UN Charter. An organization which bases admission on ethnic criteria, which meets in secret, and which is a factor threatening international peace and security

2. At the opening session of the assembly, Israel, in fact, followed the USSR and India in supporting the admission of the People's Republic of China to the UN (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 5, No. 389, pp. 550–1).

in the Middle East, can not be considered an organization operating 'in accordance with the aims and principles of the United Nations'.

If the Arab League were to gain the above mentioned official recognition, it would not be a factor contributing to peace and stabilization in the Middle East. At the same time, such recognition would reinforce claims by members of the league to a monopoly of repesentation of the whole Middle East in the elective bodies of the UN – a tendency which would be supremely unjust towards the non-Arab states in this region and would harm their interests.

Ershov

333
M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 27 September 1950

To Eytan. On Monday I visited Bazarov in the Foreign Ministry. A new man, acting director of the Near East Department. Bakulin has been ill for nearly a year, and it is doubtful whether he will return to work. I explained our position in detail in the wake of your P78, 79 and 81 and AP 419 and 422:

a) Elections to the Security Council.[1] He made no comment. I explained our objections to Lebanon. Bazarov made some vague and slightly hesitant comment which could be construed to mean that there had been an analogous problem at the previous [General] Assembly, when Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia competed for a place on the Security Council representing the same region, and at that time the Russians and we together backed the claim of Yugoslavia. Having foreseen this point before the visit and having realized that it could be used in favour of Lebanon, I said that there was no similarity because the Arab states constituted in total only about thirty-five million people and were not entitled to monopolize representation of the Near East, in which there were some thirty million people of other nations, such as Israel, Turkey and Persia, and if we added Afghanistan their total number exceeded forty million. Bazarov said nothing more on the subject. In any event, if the Russians vote for Lebanon, as seems likely, they may utilize the above-mentioned argument.

b) Syria's demand that the [Arab] League be admitted as an observer.[2] I rejected this in accordance with your cable and added that the forces of peace had no interest in supporting a racist, chauvinist organization and in strengthening externally, by artificial means, the shaky authority of a body that was rife with internecine intrigue, which frequently fell apart at the seams, and whose overt plots against us and covert plots against other peace-loving nations were aggressive and radical.

1. See Doc. 332.
2. Ibid.

c) The announcement that we would cast our vote for China was of course received with satisfaction.[3]

d) Bazarov complimented us on our reasoning and on the way we argued our case on the first two points and promised to convey them immediately to his superiors, but made do with this and was careful not to disclose their stand. Even though their votes and their attitude towards our voting do not of course depend on our being in the right but on their political needs and past manoeuvring, my conversation, in which I was able to explain what lay behind our stand, was useful.

e) I did not touch on the refugee problem mainly because I have not yet received the briefings, and if you deem it necessary that I hold another conversation, I request that you cable me the essence of the argumentation.

Namir

334
W. Eytan to M. Namir (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/3
Tel Aviv, 5 October 1950

Personal to Namir
Pursuant to the exchange of cables between you and Zyama [Zalman] Aranne, I have now been instructed by the prime minister to request that you return to Israel quickly, if possible no later than 15 or 20 November.[1] The government has decided to dispatch Zalman Shazar to Moscow as minister, and we are asking for the Russians' approval through Ershov.[2] Since the [foreign] minister

---

Doc. 333
3. See Doc. 332, n. 2.

Doc. 334
1. Namir was returned to Israel to assume the position of secretary-general of the Histadrut.
2. On 4 October 1950 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel informed Ershov that Namir was leaving the post of minister in Moscow and asked for Soviet consent to the nomination of Zalman Shazar as minister to the USSR (AVP RF, f.059, op.24, d.332, l.288).

   On 6 October the Near and Middle East Department asked Deputy Minister of State Security S.I. Ogol'tsov if the MGB had any objections to Shazar's appointment. On the following day Ogol'tsov wrote Gromyko, describing Shazar's background, activity in the Poale Zion Socialist Party in Germany during World War I and in Palestine, where he had been editor of *Davar* until his appointment as minister of education and culture in 1949. Ogol'tsov noted that *Davar* systematically published articles with an anti-Soviet slant and had persisted in waging an anti-Soviet campaign since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and the State of Israel. Finally, he listed Shazar's remaining relatives in the Soviet Union, adding that his brother had recently been 'sentenced to 10 years in a labour camp for his nationalist anti-Soviet activities'.

and Zyama Aranne are presently at Lake Success, there is nothing I can add at the moment concerning the plans of the government and the party.

Best wishes.

Eytan

335
A. Levavi to M. Namir (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/3
Tel Aviv, 13 October 1950

The Soviet legation is renewing its demand for the transfer of the property.[1] Before the internationalization resolution we undertook in writing to transfer virtually everything.[2] The internationalization resolution changes the situation completely.

Levavi

(cont.)

On 14 October, Gromyko asked Lavrent'ev and Bazarov to prepare a report for Stalin. On 21 October a letter was sent to Stalin signed by Gromyko with all the above information, a statement that Shazar had participated in the congress of the Second International and of the International Federation of Trade Unions, and a recommendation to 'refrain from granting an *agrément*' for Shazar's appointment. Stalin added a note endorsing this decision saying that the Israelis should be told simply that 'there are some difficulties'.

On 12 January 1951, Vyshinskii instructed the Soviet minister in Tel Aviv to inform Sharett that there were difficulties with Shazar's nomination and that the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggested that another candidate be nominated. For an account of Soviet treatment of Shazar's nomination based on Soviet documentation, see Pinkus, 'The Soviet Rejection of Zalman Shazar', pp. 184–212. See also Doc. 346.

Doc. 335

1. In its note dated 5 October 1950, the Soviet legation asked the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a reply to its note of 6 June 1950 (both filed under ISA 130.11/2501/18). The Soviet note dealt with three matters: (a) the Soviet request for Israeli written confirmation of the appointment of the Moscow Patriarchate representative as head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission. The confirmation was to be complemented by a list of church property which had been conveyed to Archimandrite Leonid by Rabinovich (see Doc 222); (b) a request for speedy re-registration in the name of the Soviet government and transfer to the jurisdiction of the Soviet legation in Israel all property which had belonged to the tsarist government, including that of Grand Duke Sergei; (c) legal succession from the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society to the Russian Palestine Society of the USSR Academy of Sciences.
2. See Doc. 222.

336
Meeting: A. Levavi – V. Rozhkov (Tel Aviv, 20 October 1950)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2501/18

Referring to the reminder of the Soviet legation concerning Russian property,[1] and remarking that he saw no reason to delay a reply, Mr. Levavi noted that our position in principle concerning Russian property had not changed. Mr. Levavi went on to briefly review the situation regarding the property of the [Russian Ecclesiastical] Mission and that of the former tsarist government, and said in conclusion that the mission's property was in effect in the possession and administration of the Church's representative, while that of the tsarist government, insofar as it was listed in the land registry books, had already been registered in the name of the Soviet government. As for the buildings and lands that constituted this type of property for which no change of registry had yet been effected, this was merely a technical matter, due, as the legation also knew, to the absence of data needed to track down their registration. These flaws could be overcome, and the matter should be entrusted to an experienced lawyer. As for the rest of the properties, without explicitly citing them (reference is to the property of Grand Duke Sergei and that of the [Imperial] Orthodox [Palestine] Society), Mr. Levavi said that the time for arranging the matter would come with the full implementation of a just solution to the Jerusalem issue. He said that the UN resolution was both unjust and unrealistic and expressed the hope that it would be withdrawn, adding that several of the delegations had already changed their stand and that we had at the time been delighted to hear that the Soviet Union was opposed to the internationalization of Jerusalem.

To this comment, Rozhkov said that Malik had at the time informed us of the change in the Soviet Union's position regarding Jerusalem.[2] Relating to the explanation he had heard from Mr. Levavi, he said that our position was incomprehensible after the legation had furnished all the proofs requested by Dr. Eliashiv.

Mr. Levavi explained to him again that we wished to get through the present stage of the situation on Jerusalem. The message of ours to which Mr. Rozhkov was referring was from August 1949,[3] whereas the internationalization resolution had been passed later, in December 1949. Mr. Levavi reiterated that our position had not changed in principle, and that the complication that had arisen was the reason for the delay. As to the question of

1. See Doc. 335, n. 1.
2. See Doc. 313.
3. In this note, dated 19 August 1949, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked the Soviet legation to convey evidence that the property of Grand Duke Sergei had actually been the property of the Russian imperial government, and that the Russian Palestine Society in the USSR was the legal successor of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society (ISA 130.11/2501/18). See also Doc. 335, n. 1.

the property of Sergei and of the society, Mr. Levavi said that this constituted a new chapter, which should not be opened as long as the present abnormal situation persisted. For example, this very conversation was taking place in Tel Aviv and not in Jerusalem, the capital. Or again, some consuls were operating in Jewish Jerusalem without authorization from the government of Israel.

Rozhkov made do with this explanation and moved on to the issue of the Church's property, emphasizing that this problem, despite the explicit assurances contained in our message of 19 August 1949, had not yet been resolved.

Mr. Levavi asked what we could do in practice, since all the Church property was effectively under the administration of Bishop Vladimir. Vladimir's status was not in fact less than that of the heads of other churches. Rozhkov replied that this property had been transferred in 1917 by the mandatory power to the opponents of the Soviet government, and that its transfer to the representative of the Church after the establishment of the State of Israel had been effected only verbally, and was not legally valid as long as the signature of Mr. Rabinovich was not endorsed by the government of Israel. They also placed importance on government approval of the appointment of Bishop Vladimir as the representative of the Patriarch of Moscow.

Replying to the remark of Mr. Levavi, which had been framed as a question – whether they feared we would permit Antipov[4] to return – Rozhkov replied that since they were aware of the positive attitude of the government of Israel towards the Soviet Union, they were certain that there was no cause for such concern.

Mr. Levavi asked for time to consider the matter.

Rozhkov took from his pocket a memorandum which had been conveyed by the legation on 25 July 1949,[5] and read a few passages from it, focusing on the details of their claim to the property of the tsarist government. He showed particular interest in the consulate building, a prominent structure in the Russian Compound in Jerusalem, widely accepted as being their property, but not yet transferred to them.

As to the question of why this had not yet been arranged, Rozhkov said he was surprised to learn that the building did not appear in the land registry, especially since the Turkish government was strict about issuing building permits for stone buildings and took care to record them in the land registry books.

Mr. Levavi suggested to Rozhkov that the matter be entrusted to a lawyer, and promised our intervention if the lawyer proved unable to find the record.

Returning to the question of the property of Sergei and the society, Rozhkov inquired directly whether he had understood correctly that we were deferring the settlement of these two types of property to a later date.

---

4. Antipov had been the administrator of the Orthodox Palestine Society during the latter period of British mandatory rule (see Doc. 53).
5. This memorandum is filed under ISA 130.11/2501/19. It asks the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *inter alia*, to confirm Rabinovich's signature in the latter's agreement with Archimandrite Leonid. On Rabinovich's initiative, see Doc. 222.

Mr. Levavi reiterated his earlier explanation, while emphasizing that greater heed should be paid to the positive aspects of his remarks.

Rozhkov tried to draw a conclusion, noting that, according to his understanding of the explanation, the whole matter was being left open.

Mr. Levavi replied that we would not leave the Jerusalem question open indefinitely.

Afterwards Rozhkov raised the question of the building that was occupied by the government hospital and that of the prison, noting that contracts had not yet been signed with the occupants and that they had no control over the buildings, even though they were legal landlords in every respect.[6]

Mr. Levavi suggested to Rozhkov that they use their right to file a legal suit, saying that these matters concerned tenant–landlord relations.[7]

337
Meeting: A.A. Gromyko – M. Namir (Moscow, 24 October 1950)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.3, P.5, D.4, L 23.
Secret

I received Namir today at his request.

Namir began the conversation by saying that in connection with the termination of his posting as minister in Moscow and forthcoming departure for Israel in a fortnight,[1] he had come to express his sincere thanks for the cooperation afforded to him by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in his work in Moscow. Namir expressed his best wishes for the Soviet people.

In response I wished him a happy return to Israel.

Namir then made a personal request to me, as follows: Since 1939 he had lost all contact with his father, mother and younger sister, who had lived in the Ukraine before the war. During the war, Namir's brother had tried unsuccessfully to get in touch with his parents by sending letters and telegrams to their old address in the town of Kherson. At the end of the war, Namir apparently learned from a letter of an acquaintance in Tel Aviv that his father had been killed in the Ukraine by the Germans. However, Namir's repeated applications to the Soviet Red Cross had not led to any information about the fate of his mother and sister.

Doc. 336

6. Two buildings of the Russian compound in Jerusalem – the hospital and the Mariinsky hostel – were used during and after the British Mandate as a hospital and prison, respectively.
7. For the Soviet transcript of this conversation, see Ershov's telegram of 21 October 1950 in AVP RF, f.059, op.24, p.52, d.333, l.3.

Doc. 337

1. See Doc. 334.

Namir went on to say that about a fortnight ago he had received a letter from his brother in Tel Aviv, in which the brother apparently said that he had received a letter from a certain inhabitant of Kherson saying that Namir's aged mother had recently visited the flat of this person in Kherson.

When he told me this, Namir did not give me the name or address of the person in Kherson, but he said that he had sent his brother a telegram asking for these details. Namir asked me for help in getting permission for him to make an urgent visit to Kherson by train or plane in the hope that he could see his mother. Namir remarked that he could not go to Kherson without the necessary permission, since the town was in a prohibited zone.[2] He would go there with his secretary and stay one day.

In reply, I told Namir that when the question of his trip to Kherson had been clarified he would be informed about it.[3]

At the end of our conversation, Namir requested that I attend his farewell reception at the legation on 2 November.

I thanked him for the invitation and said that if circumstances permitted, I would come to the reception.

The conversation lasted 20 minutes. First Secretary of the Near and Middle East Department Comrade A.I. Tat'ianchenko was present.[4]

USSR Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
A. Gromyko

338
M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 30 October 1950

(a) Gromyko was extremely cordial in the farewell conversation.[1] He expressed his regret at the termination of my service, offered good wishes for success in the future, and even voiced a kind of aphorism that surprised me a little: 'Things are good for you because you are going home, but we are sad because you are leaving Moscow'. No political questions or the like came up, apart from one matter which I raised with him and which I will report on later

---

Doc. 337

2. Kherson, like many other cities in the Soviet Union, was in a zone prohibited to foreigners.
3. Namir eventually visited his mother in Kherson from 3 to 6 November 1951 (see *Shlihut beMoskva,* pp. 225–9).
4. Copies to Stalin, Molotov, Malenkov, Beria, Mikoian, Kaganovich, Bulganin, Khrushchev. See also Namir's account of this meeting in Doc. 338.

Doc. 338

1. See Doc. 337.

in a separate cable.[2] I expressed my gratitude to him, to the minister, and to his aides for their courtesy and my good wishes to the people of the Soviet Union and its government. Gromyko responded with cordial good wishes for our country and our government and personally to Sharett. The day before yesterday, at the Czechs' independence day reception, I spoke again with him and his wife. She was extremely complimentary to me and emotionally expressed regret at my leaving. As in the past, it was again impossible not to be moved by her simple, frank words, uttered with unmistakable Russian warmth and without an iota of diplomatic mannerisms.

(b) The foreign correspondents relate that among those attending the All-Soviet Conference of Partisans of Peace were the heads of various faiths. These representatives of the Orthodox, the Lutherans, the Muslims, and one lama, apparently a follower of Buddha, also delivered rather lengthy speeches. Some were elected to the Central Committee. No, repeat no, representative of the Jewish faith took part, and according to the journalists, the sense of surprise and the feeling this was not accidental were conspicuous in the atmosphere of the conference.

(c) I must reiterate what I emphasized in my previous cables, that press reports here from the [General] Assembly frequently underscore the proximity between the stand of the Arabs, especially Lebanon and Syria, and of the Soviet Union on issues of war and peace and on several other questions. Sometimes mild criticism is levelled at some detail of the Arabs' position, but for the most part their remarks are reported with sympathy, albeit cautiously. Also noteworthy is the fact that since representatives of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan were added to their delegation, the press frequently describes the achievements of the Muslim peoples in the Soviet Union and their virtues. The illustrated weekly *Ogonek* has recently devoted a great deal of space to articles and a plethora of photographs on the life of the Muslim communities. One can not but get the impression of a multi-dimensional pro-Muslim propaganda campaign, the ramifications of which are also directed abroad. On the other hand, even though the routine vilification of Israel has tapered off considerably, and despite the great amount of sympathetic publicity given to the speeches of Sharett and Eban at the Assembly, there is no fundamental change for the better. The calumnious article on the government crisis citing *Kol haam*, which was given wide publicity – I cabled an uncoded summary – is in itself sufficient to besmirch our name in the eyes of a representative of the Protocol Department and especially in the eyes of the Jews, and this indeed may have been the principal intention.

(d) The Foreign Ministry acceded to my oral request and took all the members of our legation, escorted by a protocol officer, to visit a kolkhoz about 40 kilometres from Moscow. We toured the place for a few hours and

2. Apparently Namir's request to see his aged mother (see Doc. 337).

learned a lot. We were extremely surprised to discover that the chairman, an agronomist, who was also the party secretary, as well as one of the secretaries were all Jews and that they were the only three Jews among the four hundred Christian families on the farm. The agronomist, whose name is Moshe Zlotin, knows Hebrew, having studied at the Hebrew secondary school in Ekaterinoslav together with Avraham Shlonsky and Dan Pines. Afterwards the French ambassador was envious and also asked for permission. He was promised a visit, but despite his explicit request, they told him that they would not be able to take him to the kolkhoz we had visited but to a different one. The reason for the refusal is not clear; in fact, I do not know whether we were taken deliberately or by chance to a farm that is run by Jews, of all people.

Please inform my brother in total confidence that my sister-in-law Liza, from Odessa, visited here last week and I met her secretly, four times.

Namir

339
A. Levavi to M. Namir (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/3
Tel Aviv, 3 November 1950

For your personal information. The foreign minister spoke with Vyshinskii concerning emigration from the Soviet Union. Vyshinskii's reply was negative in content, although polite and almost apologetic. He did not try to argue that there were no Soviet Jews who wished to immigrate to Israel, but noted that issuing exit permits contravened the very system of the Soviet Union. He cited an example of Soviet citizens of Polish extraction who could not be permitted to move to Poland. Vyshinskii said during the conversation: 'After all, you do not expect us to permit a million Jews to leave?' Our foreign minister said: 'Allow fifty thousand; allow ten thousand'. But Vyshinskii persisted with his negative explanation and hinted that there was no point in a visit by our foreign minister to Moscow because in any event they were already talking during the [General] Assembly session.[1] Vyshinskii expressed his pleasure at the immigration from Romania.[2]

Levavi

1. No other record or evidence of this meeting with Vyshinskii has been traced either in Israeli or Soviet sources.
2. Romania changed its emigration policy at the end of 1949, enabling the exodus of 1,000 to 2,000 Jews per month during 1950. No reason or explanation was given for this change of policy, and its repression of Zionist activists continued.

340
A.A. Gromyko to P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.24, P.27, D.154, L.149
Moscow, 9 November 1950

When you next speak to the minister of foreign affairs or the director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, you must refer to Rozhkov's conversation with Levavi on 20 October[1] and make it clear that you consider that the Israeli government's intention to postpone any practical solution to the question of transferring to us the Russian property about which Levavi informed us is quite unjustified. You must point out that, in your opinion, the UN General Assembly's solution to the question of Jerusalem and the government of Israel's satisfaction at the Soviet Union's justified demands for the return of property incontrovertibly belonging to it are completely separate issues and one can not and must not be conditioned upon the solution of the other.

Inform me of the outcome of your conversation.[2]

341
M. Namir to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 13 November 1950

(a) Last Friday I took my leave of Zorin. Following the usual polite remarks and mutual good wishes, Zorin, without any provocation on my part, launched into a discussion of the international situation. The basic tone was a moderately phrased but very bitter complaint about the outside world, which incited against the Soviet Union and distorted its internal image and foreign policy aims. Some of the distortions he put down to ignorance, misunderstanding and misconception, but the majority were deliberately malicious fabrications. Briefly, as if in passing, he expressed his regret that part of the Israeli public had also adopted a hostile attitude, and he asked me, on the basis of my lengthy experience and my personal observation of various parts of Russia, to dispel prejudices, unwarranted fears and malicious falsifications. Peace was essential to the peoples of the Soviet Union. The legacy of the war was extremely onerous, the standard of living was inadequate. Every corner of the country was crying out for repair of the ruins, for improved living conditions, for protracted economic production, and for the development of wastelands. The huge afforestation and irrigation projects that have been initiated were not

1. See Doc. 336.
2. See Doc. 346.

camouflage manoeuvres but the product of a forceful and sincere decision, the true intentions of which were distorted by enemies. In contrast to his usual dry and rigid manner, Zorin spoke this time with inner emotion, with concern and in a melancholy tone which might also be construed as an expression of Russian apprehension and belief that the West was absolutely determined to attack Russia, no matter what.

In my reply I refrained from giving an opinion about the international situation in general, limiting myself to expressing the hope that the debates, as well as personal, informal contacts between the sides at Lake Success, would bring about some sort of *modus vivendi*. However, I seized on his positive remark about Israel and put to him frankly our complaints against the TASS telegrams [from Israel] and their press, the failure of our efforts to establish commercial relations, cultural ties and personal political contact through mutual visits by high-ranking representatives, and to obtain a little aid in the form of experts, commercial credit, education, medical science, and the purchase of military equipment – after all, our requests had been modest enough. I expressed the hope that what Golda [Meyerson] and I had not succeeded in achieving during our tenure would be achieved by our new minister, for the mutual benefit of both countries. I concluded my remarks by noting two key points of congruity and identity of interests between us: first, a concentration of pioneering efforts in rehabilitation, in the economy and in the development of wastelands for a rapid and comprehensive 'ingathering of exiles', whatever sacrifices this might entail. Second, the aspiration to international peace, which was not the subjective will of my government but a vital, objective need for our people in Israel and in the Diaspora – both because of the loss of a third of the Jewish people in the war and the need to build its young state, and because our brethren, scattered around the world, were liable, in a new war, to face the tragic and absurd danger of fighting against one another. Finally, I underscored our policy of non-alignment that frequently gave rise to misunderstanding [and] anger, sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other. However, we had foreseen and resigned ourselves to this inconvenience, and as long as the present government was in power we would not deviate from our declared policy. Zorin heard me out with very marked tension but made no response, and after exchanging good wishes we parted very cordially. An aide took notes of the conversation. I would surmise that his intention in explaining the world situation – which was the focus of his remarks – was to have them reach Western ears through me.

(b) In the conversation with Zorin and on the following day with the chief of protocol Molochkov, I deliberately mentioned Shazar's nomination,[1] but did not succeed in discovering what was happening with the *agrément*, although I believe the delay is a purely routine bureaucratic matter; in the meantime, I heard that there have been various cases of lengthy delays in issuing the *agrément* for no particular reason.

1. See Doc. 334 and n. 2 there.

(c) In the farewell conversation with Molochkov it emerged beyond any doubt that our visit to the kolkhoz, in my cable 578, was deliberately arranged at a farm that is run by Jews.[2]

(d) The French, Swedish, Austrian and Swiss embassies, as well as correspondents of United [Press], France-Presse and Associated [Press] held farewell dinners for me with appropriate eulogies. The most excessive was that of [French Ambassador] Chataingeux, who delivered a moving speech replete with very personal – not diplomatic – expressions of affection, politeness and friendship.

(e) I suggest first making public that I called on Zorin and that on this occasion a conversation on various diplomatic issues took place. Second, the contents of paragraph (d) above.

Namir

342
Meeting: Sh. Eliashiv – Ia. Malik (New York, 21 November 1950)

COPY: ISA 93.03/84/21
New York, 21 November 1950
Secret

I had a long talk with the Soviet permanent representative at the UN, Mr. Iakov Malik. The occasion was the dinner given by our delegation for the heads of other delegations. We sat together at the table and were able to have a long uninterrupted conversation.

Even before we had been seated, he inquired about our affairs, referring in particular to Jerusalem, and to the mysterious Swedish–Dutch proposal which had been talked about so much and had not yet surfaced.[1] (They know the content of the proposal. He had a talk about it with Eban and I had several talks with Tsarapkin. We also gave them the proposal itself.) The minister of foreign affairs joined in this part of the conversation and informed him that the

---

Doc. 341
2. See Doc. 338.

Doc. 342
1. Reference is to a joint Swedish–Dutch draft resolution on Jerusalem which attempted to solve the deadlock by limiting international control only to the holy places, this control to be exercised by a UN commissioner responsible to the General Assembly. The proposal was later amended by the US, Britain and Uruguay, but did not come to a vote.

Vatican might agree to this proposal. He asked whether we would agree to it, and was told that we would, provided certain amendments were made. He also asked what was the position of the Arabs.

At the table, we touched on a great variety of subjects, and I shall refer to the main ones. He talked with admiration about our achievements, remarking that the world perhaps did not yet appreciate their magnitude and importance. When I gave him the numbers of the new immigrants, he said: 'This is as if America admitted 70 million people.' He asked to what extent we were in need of external aid. I explained that our needs for such aid emanated mainly from the immigration and its absorption, and that our main emphasis was on aid from world Jewry. I told him about the Washington Conference[2] and about the large sums we were demanding from America's Jews. He listened attentively to the problems of the immigration, its composition, its variety of languages and countries of origin. I particularly stressed the importance we attached to immigration from Eastern Europe as a counterbalance to that from the East, which was liable to lower our cultural level. Here I referred in particular, as an example, to the change that had occurred with regard to immigration from Romania.[3] He asked about the Negev and the prospects of irrigation. He was amazed by what I told him about the Revivim water works, and spoke of similar enterprises and similar problems in Soviet Central Asia. He told me about the plans now under discussion for diverting large rivers into new channels, to places where the water could be better utilized.[4] He added here: 'If only they could let us do our work in peace and we did not have to spend billions on armaments.'

He displayed interest in our governmental crisis, its causes and consequences, and in our various parties.

We also talked about the relations between the Soviet Union and other countries and about America's attitude to them. He said that the Americans had no sense of historical perspective when they discussed the Soviet Union. On the one hand, they kept forgetting the historical examples of the many invasions of Russia that occurred in every generation and always ended in victory for the Russians. On the other, they tended to detract from the various achievements when they discussed everyday life in the Soviet Union, because they compared them to what existed in the United States. And again they

2. In light of the major influx of immigrants during 1950, Israel made efforts to raise large amounts of money from American Jewry and from US government sources. At the end of June 1950 American Zionist and Jewish leaders met in Israel and resolved to raise 1.5 billion dollars over the next three years. At subsequent meetings in Washington, Eban coordinated joint efforts with Jewish leaders to influence Congress and the Administration to safeguard US aid allocations to Israel (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 5, No. 412, p. 579).
3. See Doc. 339 and n. 2 there.
4. On 12 September 1950, *Pravda* published a resolution of the USSR Council of Ministers on the construction of the Main Turkmen Canal which was to divert the waters of the Amu-Darya River for irrigation of lands in the Kara-Kum desert.

ignored the historical perspective and did not bear in mind the conditions that prevailed in various spheres of life in pre-revolutionary Russia.

I asked him how he would assess what the United Nations had done since he had arrived here. His evaluation was sincerely positive. He said that one had to appreciate the very fact of constant contact between the states and the personal contacts resulting from them, which enabled simple human conversation and mutual understanding.

I shall not report here on other subjects of the conversation, in which he revealed intelligence and a high cultural level.

S.E.

343
Z. Argaman to A. Levavi (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/4
Moscow, 30 December 1950

Following the rabbi's return from a lengthy vacation, we sent him the usual request to set a date for a meeting of introduction with Argaman. After evading us on various pretexts, he finally informed us that it would be best to meet during prayers. His tone made clear the change that has occurred. Details by messenger.

Argaman

344
Meeting: A.P. Vlasov – Z. Argaman (Moscow, 2 January 1951)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.050, OP.51, P.72, D.744, L.41

I saw Argaman at his request.

[1.] Argaman told me that the legation's files contained a number of declarations by Israeli citizens who want to legalize their divorces from Soviet citizens.[1] According to Israeli law, divorce must be legalized religiously as well as civilly. Argaman said that in this connection it would be desirable to receive certification both from the registry office and from the rabbi.

I asked Argaman to put this request in writing. Argaman promised to send a note.

2. Argaman then asked how to obtain testimony from Soviet citizens with testamentary business in Israel. I advised him to apply to the Iniurkollegiia.[2]

3. As for the establishment of permanent diplomatic ties between Tel Aviv and the Israeli legation in Moscow, Argaman asked whether it would be possible to obtain entry and exit visas for permanent Israeli diplomatic couriers.

I asked Argaman to make an official request in writing, giving the names of the diplomatic couriers.

The conversation lasted 20 minutes. Arokh, the director of the Consular Department of the Israeli legation in Moscow, was present at the conversation.

Vlasov

345
Z. Argaman to A. Levavi (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2492/2

Moscow, 8 January 1951

Secret

Dear Levavi,

In this survey I will try to touch on several matters which relate primarily to our legation in Moscow.

Before proceeding, I must make several personal comments:

There is no doubt that Namir's departure shortly after my arrival here had a major impact on my adaptation to 'diplomatic' work in Moscow. A relatively lengthy time passed before I could penetrate the peculiarities of the place,

1. See Doc. 297.
2. Russian acronym for special legal office dealing with issues of international private law. Established in Moscow in 1937, it dealt with civil suits of Soviet citizens abroad and of foreign citizens in the USSR.

learn how to observe things, get to know the people, and distinguish, as far as possible, between the salient and the trivial. The arrangement of the legation's routine activities (working guidelines in the office, deciding on some sort of bookkeeping method, etc.) commanded a lot of attention and took up no little time, and if we take into account that all the legation personnel are in fact new and that the conditions in Moscow are not sufficiently clear to them – you will understand how difficult it was, without any guidance, to direct my work into specific channels, to concentrate on the evaluation of facts and events and draw conclusions from them.

Even though I am still far from being an 'expert' in many fields, I will nevertheless try to sum up a few matters, as I see them.

OUR LEGATION IN MOSCOW, ITS STATUS AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITY

Contact with Representatives of the Government

A. The Foreign Ministry

I believe that I will not be making any revelations if I note that the prevailing view among all the diplomats is that diplomatic activity in the normal, accepted sense in other countries does not in fact exist here. One does not meet with representatives of the government other than in extraordinary cases, and even then one has to stick to a particular subject without being able to launch a general conversation on a specific political issue.

It is regrettable that during my stay here I have not had the opportunity to visit the Foreign Ministry (apart from a courtesy call on the acting director of protocol, together with Namir). I can not, therefore, pass judgement from my own experience, but I imagine that my views are consistent with reality.

I have had only two opportunities to meet with Zorin: at the Albanian and Finnish [receptions]. However, on both occasions the circumstances hardly permitted a political conversation to develop. From the talk with Budennyi[1] at the 7 November celebration and, at the Albanians, with Bushuev, the acting director of protocol (certainly no special importance should be attached to him), I concluded that these people, at least, had no conception of our [national] construction, of the ingathering of the exiles, and our special status among the nations and in the Middle East. Their attitude towards us is determined by their press, our behaviour at the UN, and our approach to the question of Korea and all it entails. A brief informative effort on our part sufficed to get the two of them to express appreciation for our development program.

I do not want to delude myself that intensive educational work would do a world of good, but I think that every opportunity must be exploited, or – more correctly – opportunities must be created, for more frequent meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and at them to describe developments in Israel. It is inconceivable, after all, that for months there

1. Semen M. Budennyi, member of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. See also Doc. 149, n. 3.

should be no official contact between the legation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During this period several important issues, from both an Israeli and an international point of view, were on the agenda, and it seems to me that at least in connection with the issues relating to Israel – Jerusalem, refugees, the Suez Canal, etc. – it would have been worthwhile clarifying the position of the Soviet government. One could, of course, argue that there is no need for this, since both the Soviet and the Israeli delegations are at Lake Success and they maintain constant contact. But in my view it will do no harm at all if here, too, a dialogue is held on our specific problems. In any event, on the question of closing the Suez Canal[2] there was certainly room for a conversation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, especially since the Soviet press is so sympathetic to the position of Egypt on the evacuation of the canal by British forces.

More can be done as well concerning the attitude of the Soviet press. I am aware of the government's reply to our approaches in this matter, and again, I pin no great hopes on a change in this attitude as long as international tension persists, but we can not leave the matter without any reaction. It seems to me that since the government claims to have no influence on the press, we might suggest sending, via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a denial of remarks published, for example, in *Novoe vremia*. You will understand that I do not conceive of the possibility that such a denial will be published, but our very request would be important, I think, and enable further discussion on this subject.

As to the recent press attitude towards us, it is, in my opinion, not very different from that towards any other country that is not one of the People's Democracies. During my stay here I have not found one article report, or editorial that contains a positive evaluation of any government, including those of India and Pakistan. True, the press refrains from attacking the Arab states and treats Egypt with a modicum of sympathy, but only in its struggle with Britain. In my view, the press here can not behave any differently; it can not inform its readers about any constructive, positive activity in any sphere that takes place in a country with a regime different from that of the Soviet Union or the People's Democracies, since its principal and exclusive role is to prove that there is no other regime capable or skilled enough to provide the people with a better and happier form of life than that enjoyed by the inhabitants of the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies, for which the Soviet Union serves as a model and guide.

Therefore, I myself am not perturbed about the press attitude towards us, and I believe that, in spite of it, we have the ability to explain properly the

2. The Egyptian closure of the Suez Canal to Israeli shipping and Israeli-bound goods transported under a foreign flag was discussed by the Security Council in late October and early November 1950. The Israeli position received a sympathetic hearing, but it was resolved to refer all outstanding problems between Israel and the Arab states to the decision of the Mixed Armistice Commissions. It had already been on the agenda of the Egyptian–Israeli Mixed Armistice Commission since May 1949 (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 5, *Companion Volume*, pp. 218–19).

character of our enterprise and our policy in view of our special status in the world in general and in the Near East in particular. To achieve this goal, we must – taking into account the special circumstances of diplomatic activity in the Soviet Union – create more possibilities of contact with the representatives of the government than has been the case until now, and do this by bringing our international problems to the attention of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs. You may think me a dreamer who has not yet grasped Soviet reality and sees things in a rosy light even though they are actually quite dark. But even if this is your opinion, I think it best to permit this dreamer to try his luck again – in any case, it is better than doing nothing.

Concretely, I suggest that from time to time you empower the legation to bring to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' attention certain issues on which the position of the Soviet government is important to us.

B. The Ministry of Foreign Trade

I have twice had contacts with this ministry. Once with the director of protocol, Mr. Kuzminskii, and the second time with the acting director of the department for commercial contracts, Mr. Smirnov. The former was limited to introducing myself and clarification of matters of procedure. And although the conversation was 'friendly', as they put it here, I can not note anything special beyond an exchange of courtesies. The second meeting was more interesting. I described for Mr. Smirnov the development of our industry and our needs in connection with large-scale immigrant absorption and the building and development of the country. He listened very attentively, and seemed to be hearing much of what I said for the first time. He was especially amazed at the scale of our immigration and development plans. I explained to him that we have an interest in maintaining normal commercial ties with the Soviet Union, which should in large measure be based on barter trade. You will find the details of the conversation on this subject in my letter to the Economic Division, a copy of which I append here.[3]

I take this opportunity to note that in effect I have received no instructions concerning the character of the negotiations I am supposed to conduct with the Soviet government on the question of commercial ties. Clearly I could not deal with the purchase and sale of various types of individual merchandise – I do not have the expertise or the knowledge – and I regard my role as being to prepare the ground for the negotiations of a commercial treaty with the Soviet Union, and this of course I am trying to do.

As for Smirnov's question (which surprised me a little) about whether a commercial treaty has the consent of our government, it was prompted, in my view, by the fact that at the time similar talks were conducted by Mr. Bejerano, and from the exchange of letters in the legation's files I learn that after a time

3. See Argaman to the Director of the Economic Division, 27 Dec. 1950, ISA 130.11/2512/1.

Mr. Bejerano was compelled to break off the talks because of our government's inability then to offer Israeli goods to the Soviet government. If my assumption is correct, the very fact that the question was posed shows a serious approach to the proposal for a commercial treaty. I await, therefore, clear instructions from the director of the Economic Division, and I would be grateful if you could help by giving your comments, if you have any.

C. Other Government Institutions

Apart from routine matters, we have no contact with any government institutions.

At a reception given by the Albanians, Arokh and I were introduced by Bushuev (at his initiative) to the chairman of VOKS, Prof. Denisov. I intend to utilize the opportunity presented by the receipt of the shipment of books from the National Library for the Academy of Sciences in Moscow in order to hold a conversation with him. More to come.

Sincerely,

Argaman
Chargé d'Affaires at the Israel Legation in Moscow

346
Meeting: M.L. Mukhin – M. Sharett (Tel Aviv, 14 January 1951)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.089, OP.26, P.58, D.361, L.6

I called on Sharett today. I began by making a statement on the property question according to your instructions.[1]

Sharett heard me out, and said that Israel did indeed have a hyper-sensitive attitude to the Jerusalem question, and as for the property, he had fallen behind on many things during the [UN General] Assembly session and would find it difficult to give an answer now; but he would try to clarify the position immediately and to return to this question.

I reminded Sharett that we had already reached complete agreement on the whole question of the Soviet Union's property rights. This agreement had been formulated through an exchange of notes,[2] but instead of carrying out the agreement, the Israelis, according to my understanding of Levavi's statement, are trying to renege on their promises.

1. See Doc. 340.
2. Reference is the Israeli note of 19 August 1949 and the Soviet note of 6 June 1950 (ISA 130.11/2501/18; AVP RF, f.059, op.24, p.27, d.154, l.85). The Israeli note of 19 August 1949 recounted the discussion of property issues held by Israeli Attorney-General Shapira and Director of the East European Division Eliashiv with Soviet Chargé d'Affaires Mukhin on 3 August 1949. It dealt with four types of: property: that of the Ecclesiastical Mission, the imperial government, of Grand Duke Sergei and of the Orthodox Palestine Society. For the contents of the Soviet note of 6 June 1950, see Doc. 335, n. 1.

Sharett said that he was treating the matter seriously, and that Israel recognized the binding force of promises and obligations and that the appropriate people would look into the matter.

Sharett then said he was glad that I had come to see him, since he had been intending to invite me to come and discuss the long delayed answer about the *agrément* for Shazar.[3] Sharett added that he had mentioned this when he was saying goodbye to Vyshinskii, who had made a note of it and promised to let him have an answer when he got to Moscow. My response consisted of your instructions to me. Sharett evidently did not expect such an answer. After some minutes' silence, he began to say that Israel was trying to enhance the importance of its legation in Moscow and had therefore recommended Shazar, who was a member of the government, as its minister. But the answer greatly distressed him and not only him. The prime minister would be deeply upset by this answer. Turning to me, Sharett then said: 'This means that the answer must be understood as a refusal of *agrément* for Shazar with no explanation given.' I replied that I had nothing to add to what had been said.

Sharett again expressed his regret, and turning to Levavi, who was present, said: 'So we shall have to deal with two questions.'[4]

The conversation lasted 25 minutes.

Mukhin

Editorial Note

NOTES FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE FOUR OCCUPATION POWERS IN GERMANY

On 16 January and on 12 March 1951, the government of Israel submitted two notes with more or less similar wording to the four governments of the occupying powers in Germany. One note discussed the question of individual indemnification and compensation, and the other referred to the claims of the State of Israel, speaking on behalf of the Jewish people, for reparations for damages and losses sustained during the Nazi period. Although the timing was motivated mainly by the intention of the US, Great Britain and France to hand over all powers to the newly established Federal Republic of Germany, the notes were also submitted to the Soviet government which controlled the German Democratic Republic (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 6, No. 19, pp. 35–9; No. 84, pp. 163–9; for the Soviet reaction to these notes, see Doc. 385).

---

3. See Doc 335.
4. On 19 January 1951, the government of Israel requested Soviet consent to the nomination of Shmuel Eliashiv as Israeli minister in the USSR. On 12 February 1951, Vyshinskii informed Ershov of Moscow's consent (AVP RF, f.059, op.26, p.33, d.178, l.233), which had been endorsed by Stalin (see Pinkus, 'The Soviet Rejection of Zalman Shazar', 206–7).

347
Attorney-General of Israel to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

COPY: ISA 130.11/2501/17
Jerusalem, 2 February 1951

RE: RUSSIAN PROPERTY, WITH REFERENCE
TO YOUR LETTER 12759/173070 OF 25 JANUARY 1951[1]

In the diplomatic discussion you are about to hold with the foreign minister on the subject [of Russian property in Israel], please heed the directives I gave the custodian general on 28 January 1951, a copy of which was forwarded to you, and what I wrote the minister of finance in paras. 8 and 9 of my opinion of 26 June 1950, to wit:

> If the Soviet government demands [for itself] the property of the Palestine Orthodox Society in Israel (whether on the basis of Russian general law, the society having ceased to exist; on the basis of a Soviet law that purports to nationalize the society's property or on the basis of some other pretext), it should be directed to an authorized court in Israel. Without a court judgment we can not recognize its right either to administer the property or to have it transferred to its ownership or [registered] in its name. When such a claim is filed, I will be able to intervene in the trial on behalf of the government under my powers according to para. 6 of the Procedure Law Ordinance (Amendment), 1934. Similarly, the government will also perhaps be able, if additional investigations justify this, to join as a party to the trial and claim the property for itself as assets for which there is no lawful claimant.

This applies equally to any property in Israel that is still registered in the names of private persons or in the name of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission. The government has no authority to change the current registration in the land registry books without an order from an authorized court.

Attorney-General[2]
Government of Israel

1. This letter (filed under ISA 130.11/2501/17) referred to a plot of land (the Selivestrov plot) claimed by the Soviet legation, and advised not to take any decision or make any use of this tract until the question of Russian property in Israel had been settled.
2. Haim Cohn held the post of attorney-general from February 1950.

348
Z. Argaman to A. Levavi (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2492/16
Moscow, 16 February 1951
Secret

[...][1]

C. The [Israeli] Legation and the Jews of the Soviet Union

In what follows it is not my intention to try to analyze the general situation of the Jews in the Soviet Union in the light of Soviet policy. Undoubtedly I will undertake such an analysis in a special survey after I have learned the rest of the facts and data. I will only try to describe briefly the situation in connection with our legation here and to address the questions that arise in that connection.

Under no circumstances should the two concepts – 'the legation' and 'the Jews of the Soviet Union' – be bound together. They are two worlds, and the distance between them increases from day to day. Nor are there any hopeful signs on the horizon of terminating this process and changing direction.

I do not think there is another Diaspora that is more in need of a functioning Israeli legation – in the sense that the prime minister defined it at the meeting of diplomatic representatives last summer,[2] i.e., 'an Israeli legation to the Diaspora of the people of Israel' – than the Russian Diaspora, the most wretched and suppressed Diaspora among all the dispersions of the Jewish people. Yet no other Israeli legation has less contact with Jews than ours.

Notes based on chance meetings of our staff with Jews in Moscow enable us to appreciate the legation's status in this regard, and the following summary of facts emphasizes the true situation:

1. With one exception, not one Jew from the Soviet Union has visited the legation or addressed it in writing during the four months of my stay here.

2. The one case occurred in November, when a resident of Grodno, who was on a visit to Moscow, came to the legation in order to inquire about his sister, who lives in Israel. That was an exceptional event in the life of the legation here, and the suspicious types among us had doubts about the visitor's good intentions – but after piecing the facts together, and for a variety of reasons, we can say with certainty that it was a genuine visit.

3. The sporadic, formal contact we had with the rabbi has also ceased almost completely after he evaded a get-acquainted meeting with me. Although we visited the synagogue twice on Friday evenings and twice on *Shabbat mevarkhim,*[3] beyond a fragmentary exchange of courtesies with the

---

1. The first two sections, dealing with relations between the Israeli legation and other diplomatic missions in Moscow and with diplomatic routine, have been omitted.
2. See Doc 326, n. 1.
3. The Sabbath before the new moon, when a special prayer is recited.

rabbi it is impossible to exchange even a few words with one or two of the worshippers. We are ostracized from this entire Jewish community.

4. Only rarely and by sheer chance is it possible to encounter someone Jewish. However, even then it is not always possible to steer the conversation in the right direction.

5. Not only is it dangerous to be in contact with the legation or its staff, but one has the feeling that the very mention of the name 'Israeli legation' or 'State of Israel' casts fear and terror among the Jews here, and very few are brave enough to 'endanger' themselves and enter into a conversation despite everything.

6. It is impossible to ascertain how much danger actually awaits a Jew who makes contact with us, or what the basis is for the great fear in this regard – no one who spoke with us knew of a case or cases of [concrete] consequences as a result of contact with us. They know only that such contact is absolutely forbidden, and they are well aware of the consequences that can ensue from violating such a prohibition.

7. Despite all this, the Jews of Moscow are thirsty for a living word about Israel. There is a powerful longing for immigration and redemption, and a strong hope that Israel will flourish and prosper – but they harbour very little hope that they, too, will one day be among the redeemed.

8. We have no doubt that the authorities are exercising extreme vigilance to ensure that we make no contact whatever with Jews. This is obvious from the fact that our movements are under constant surveillance, and the greatest caution and versatile planning are required to shake off the 'escorts'.

9. Apparently the Jews in the provincial towns feel less tension about making contact with foreigners; they are less fearful than those in Moscow. However, this has to be checked further before we can be absolutely certain about it.

10. Generally, it appears that it is easier for Jews to make contact with foreigners from other countries than with us.

As I noted above, it is not my intention this time to dwell on the background, the reasons, and the causes of this situation. I want to say only that in these circumstances there is no point talking about relations between the legation and the Jews of the Soviet Union: [such relations] are completely non-existent, or, more accurately, the legation is just non-existent from the point of view of the Jews of the Soviet Union; it does not constitute a factor in their situation, nor even a subject for mere contemplation.

As I see the situation, we are witnessing the demise of a large Jewish community, rich in spirit and deeds, which despite everything is, in its subconscious, beneath the level of awareness, infused with a strong national spirit. A Jewish community from which all the roots of Jewish spiritual and cultural life have been and are being systematically and cruelly eradicated by a powerful hand; a Jewish community caught in the pincers of overt and covert racial discrimination, on the one hand, and of the vigorous repression of all national

feeling, on the other; a community whose youth is cutting off its last ties with the Jewish nation and finding its way to total assimilation.

Even if the assimilation of Jewish youth in the Soviet Union is far from rapid – that road too is strewn with many obstacles – it is clear that all the aspirations and efforts of the young people are geared in that direction. If the way is not found soon to preserve the spark of hope for redemption, we will lose these youngsters and with them the entire Jewish community.

In light of these conditions, the question presents itself: How should the legation proceed in this sphere? I will address this question in my next letter.

Sincerely,

Z. Argaman

349
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.26, P.58, D.361, LL.58–60
Tel Aviv, 27 February 1951

In connection with the 33rd anniversary of the Soviet army, ceremonies were held in various towns in Israel, organized by the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR. On 23 February at a meeting in Tel Aviv attended by representatives of the Soviet legation, Dr. Sneh, the secretary-general of the league, stated: 'Our country will not be an anti-Soviet base, and our soldiers will not be at the disposal of the Robertsons of this world.' (General Robertson, commander of British forces in the Middle East, was in Israel from 19–21 February, conducting negotiations with Ben-Gurion; we are clarifying the content of these talks.[1]) In addition, Mikunis, the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel, pointed out in his speech:

> Israel's rulers are taking serious steps towards the affiliation of our state to the aggressive Mediterranean bloc. The Atlantic Alliance's emissaries are studying the military and industrial potential of our state, and the demonstrations against General Robertson were an expression of the people's conscience, disquiet and protest.

1. The visit was initiated by the British defence establishment and had the support of the Foreign Office. Both realized that Israel was becoming an important regional factor which could play a meaningful role in time of war and was veering slowly toward a more Western orientation. Their main concern was to assure overland and air passage in the event of an East–West conflagration. Robertson met twice with Ben-Gurion. The Israeli statesman, however, was more concerned with British aid to enhance Israel's military and industrial potential than with passage facilities and suggested that Israel's relations with Britain during a state of emergency take the form of those of Commonwealth countries. The initiative petered out owing to the change of government in Britain and to the British attempt to incorporate Egypt into the proposed Middle East Command towards the end of 1951 (see Docs. 387 and 388).

The gathering sent a message to the Soviet army: 'We shall not allow our sons and brothers to be cannon-fodder in an anti-Soviet war.'

In answer to these statements the ruling party Mapai's newspaper, *Hador*, published an article on 26 February under the meaningful headline: 'Interference in Internal Affairs'. According to this article, there was 'interference in our domestic affairs by the Soviet legation in Israel'. To support this, the newspaper asserted that at the celebration of the 33rd anniversary of the Soviet army, 'the good name of the Israeli government' was allegedly besmirched, and that these gatherings were a continuation of 'the fruitless demonstrations against General Robertson's visit as an official guest of the Israeli government'. Noting further the presence at this gathering of 'representatives of the legation of a foreign government', the newspaper asked: 'Since when has the State of Israel had to endure without protest such interference in its internal affairs by the representatives of a foreign power?'

This belated note in the newspaper *Hador* was certainly inspired by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was intended to give a signal to intensify anti-Soviet propaganda in the press and also to find out our attitude towards it.

When I next speak to Sharett I intend to make it clear to him that such publications, directed against official representatives of the USSR, namely the Soviet legation in Israel, are quite unacceptable. This is the first occasion on which the legation has been accused of interference in Israel's domestic affairs.

Ershov

350
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.26, P.58, D.351. L.64
Tel Aviv, 5 March 1951

According to Riftin's report, Sharett made a brief statement to a closed session of the [Knesset Security and] Foreign Affairs Committee about the negotiations conducted by Ben-Gurion and Yadin, the chief of staff, with General Robertson, commander of British forces in the Middle East, during his visit to Israel from 19–21 February.[1] Sharett observed that Robertson had described the international situation as being on the brink of war and had assured the Israeli government that Britain would defend the Middle East on an equal footing with the US. Robertson asked what Israel would do in case of war, and when Ben-Gurion answered that Israel would defend itself with all its strength, the Englishman stated that Israel's actions must be fully coordinated with those of British troops, since the defence of the Middle East, by agreement with the US, had been entrusted to British troops, who would be supported by the

1. See Doc. 349, and n. 1 there.

American air force and navy. Ben-Gurion remarked that Israel was in very great need of munitions, to which Robertson replied that this was a technical question and would be dealt with in due course. Apart from that, Robertson proposed preparing a group of Israeli officers for training in Britain.

Robertson told Ben-Gurion about his negotiations with the Arab countries and emphasized that they had all agreed to military cooperation with Britain, but that they had also demanded arms. He gave a sceptical assessment of the Arab countries' strength, except for Transjordan, and remarked that the Israeli army should play an important role in the defence of the Middle East.

Ben-Gurion replied that this question depended greatly on making peace with the Arab countries. Robertson said that this was fully understood by London, which intended to bring pressure to bear on the Arab countries, and in the first place on Transjordan, in order to achieve the conclusion of a peace treaty with Israel. Anti-Israeli sentiments were still fairly strong in the Arab countries, especially Egypt, but British diplomacy would work to reconcile the Arabs with the existence of the State of Israel. The Arab governments had already been informed that the Tripartite Declaration of 25 May 1950[2] was a guarantee of the inviolability of frontiers in the Middle East.

Robertson then reminded Ben-Gurion of the role of Palestine's industry in World War II, when it was the basis for supplying British troops with medicines, uniforms, etc. He remarked that Israeli industry must be fully adapted to military cooperation with Britain, which would be inevitable if there was a new war.

Robertson asked about the situation of Jews in the USSR and also about the presence of pro-Soviet elements in Israel.

According to Riftin, Robertson visited a number of large military camps in Israel and learned in detail about the state of the Israeli army. He also discussed with Ben-Gurion the matter of using Israeli roads for the transfer of British troops from the Sinai Peninsula to the north. Robertson's trip to Israel was undertaken with the agreement of General Eisenhower.

Ershov

351
G. Rafael to A. Eban (Washington)

COPY: ISA 93.08/337/24
New York, 7 March 1951

I visited Lake Success yesterday during a session of the Security Council in order to speak with [Sir H.M. Gladwyn] Jebb on the commission of peace observers and to follow the debates on Kashmir. After the council meeting, as I spoke with a reporter in the chamber of representatives, Malik came up to

2. See Doc. 321, n. 2.

me, extended his hand with demonstrative cordiality, and thanked me for sending wishes for his recovery in your name and mine, together with chocolates and a bottle of Israeli brandy. He spoke enthusiastically about the excellent quality of these Israeli products and said he was amazed that we were capable of manufacturing delicacies of such superb quality. He was especially taken with the chocolate, and the description of its taste served Malik as an opening to a political conversation between us.

'I don't like American chocolate, it is sour', he explained, 'but your chocolate is very like what we eat in Russia.' After these remarks, Malik took me aside in order to get away from the photographers and reporters. His first question was 'How are things?' I replied, 'There is nothing new in the Middle East. Things in our arena are proceeding on their usual course'. 'I mean things in the Far East', Malik replied. I said that in my opinion it was time to wind up the Korean War, which was developing into a military stalemate and was causing terrible destruction and great loss of life among the Korean people and the Chinese army. There was no point in resolving the problem by force when it emerged that the fronts were consolidating near the 38th parallel. Malik replied, 'We have always emphasized the need for a peaceful solution to the Korea problem, but the Americans are not interested in ending the war.' I said that in my view he was wrong in his assessment of the tendencies being shown by the United Nations *vis-à-vis* Korea. The UN had been completely consistent in deciding to support the Americans on a cease-fire and resolve the problems through negotiations. Instead of interpreting the Americans' aims, he would do better to help us understand the goals of the People's Republic of China in joining a war against the United Nations. He did not reply directly but asked me whether the UN delegations were still inclined towards negotiations. I answered that the Entezam Committee[1] was awaiting Peking's response to its request to establish contact. Some delegations were interpreting the comments of Marshal Stalin[2] – here he stopped me and said 'Generalissimo Stalin' – I continued – the comments of Generalissimo Stalin as an opening towards renewed negotiations. To which Malik replied, 'I told you that since the eruption of the Korean War the Soviet Union has been stressing the need to resolve the problem peacefully.'

He went on to ask, 'What view do you and the other delegations take of the negotiations that have just begun in Paris among the deputy foreign ministers?' I replied that Israel would support any attempt to assuage international tension and [begin] direct negotiations. We too are very concerned

1. Nasrollah Entezam, president of the UN General Assembly, headed a three-man committee (together with the Indian and Canadian representatives) charged with imposing an immediate cease-fire in Korea.
2. Reference is to Stalin's remarks in a Radio Moscow broadcast on 16 February 1951. Asked about the international situation, he said that 'war is not inevitable at this juncture ... but is liable to become inevitable'. He attacked the UN for having become an American tool and reserved special criticism for Britain and its prime minister, accusing them of not responding to Soviet peace initiatives. He expressed confidence that the Korean War would end with the invaders' defeat and declared that the USSR would continue to keep the peace and prevent war.

about the German problem, oppose [Germany's] rearmament and are fearful of the revival of Nazism. 'How can you afford to hold a view like that, which clashes with American policy?' Malik asked. I replied that Israel determined its policy in accordance with its own views and interests. I told him that only a short time before the Knesset had adopted a resolution against the rearmament of West and East Germany, which had been conveyed to the UN secretary-general.[3] Malik expressed great interest in this and asked whether it had been reported in the *New York Times* and whether he could see the resolution. He added that only those nations that had suffered the horrors of Nazism were capable of understanding the catastrophe that was liable to ensue in the wake of Germany's rearmament. To implement their belligerent schemes against the Soviet Union, the Americans were not ashamed to make use of fascist 'bandits', whose hands were covered in blood. I replied that we must demur to his assumption that the United States was preparing a war against the Soviet Union; I spelled out a few reasons that contradicted this assumption, noting the attitude of the masses in this country, who would not support a war of aggression. Similarly, I emphasized that there was a large and cohesive group within the American public that was opposed to the revival of an armed Germany – namely, American Jewry.

Malik replied with absolute conviction that the masses had no influence on American policy and were incapable of understanding the catastrophe of warfare or of imagining the destruction caused by warfare and the atrocities of the concentration camps. They behaved like spoiled children. The United States had profited enormously from all the wars in which it had taken part since the beginning of the twentieth century, and therefore deluded itself that it would win the next war as well. The aim of the American armament effort was to prevent the spread of the economic depression that had already began to manifest itself a year and a half ago. As for American Jews, they too were incapable of understanding the horrors that had befallen their people in Europe. I replied that Jews everywhere had always identified with the suffering of their brethren. The Jewish people in every part of the Diaspora had always felt a sense of responsibility and reacted to events that occurred not only in their own country of residence but in other, distant communities as well. The same applied to the Jews of America, who adhered to the idea that all Jews were mutually responsible for one another. It should be remembered that the absolute majority of the older generation of the Jewish public in the United States consisted of immigrants from Eastern Europe, and in its day was also the victim of discrimination and persecution in tsarist Russia. As for his other assumptions, I noted that it should be understood that the tremendous war effort of the United States had come as a direct consequence of the deterioration in international relations following the eruption of the Korean War. If he was interested in the prevailing view among many moderate delegations to the

3. The resolution was adopted on 10 January 1951 (see *Divrei haknesset*, Vol. VIII, p. 743).

UN on the prospects of the Paris conference, I had to tell him that they believed the prospects for success of the Council of Four Ministers would be poor as long as the Korean War continued. All the countries seeking to alleviate international tension had to make a huge effort to terminate the war in the Far East.

To this Malik replied with a friendly chuckle, 'Does Israel have a proposal in this matter?' I said, 'We have no new proposals. We have put forward our proposals on many occasions, but unfortunately at every stage the Peking government has hesitated to accept them as a basis for negotiations. However, at every stage Peking has moved closer and closer to the principles and proposals which the First Committee adopted. If the People's government were at some stage to express its agreement in principle, things would change quickly.' Malik did not let up on this point, saying, 'I have heard that you have some new thoughts'. I replied, 'True, we are trying to formulate some thoughts that are suited to the circumstances which exist at the present.'

Finally, Malik asked whether Mr. Eban visited New York occasionally, and asked me in the meantime to convey his greetings. With these remarks and this hint he took his leave of me after a conversation lasting about 20 minutes.

G.R.

352
Excerpt from the Political Report for 1950 of the USSR Legation in Israel

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.4, P.9, D.9, LL.157–8
Tel Aviv, 28 March 1951
Secret

[...][1]

Conclusion

In 1950, which was a turning point for Israel, the countours of Israel's short-term development were quite clearly and distinctly defined.

In economic policy there would be further subjection of the economy to the interests of American capital, limitation on the growth of indigenous industry, and transformation of Israel into a market for American goods. This would be accomplished by means of foreign credits and subsidies, which would make the Israeli economy totally dependent on American monopolies.

Domestic policy would bring about further impoverishment of the masses, suppression of democratic liberties, persecution and repression of progressive

1. The excerpt comprises the last two pages of a 147-page report.

organizations, on the one hand, and encouragement of reactionary and pro-fascist forces, on the other.

In foreign policy, which already serves the interests of US ruling circles, this means, first, reinforcing Israel's hostile attitude to the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies through the use of unbridled anti-Soviet propaganda, and second, the ultimate loss of sovereign independence.

The government of Israel is pursuing mass immigration by all possible means, which, in fact, strengthens reactionary forces in the country and is turning the State of Israel into one of the stronger states in the Middle East, in spite of the fact that it has a smaller population than neighbouring Arab states. Given favourable international circumstances and no objections from the US, Israel will not forgo the opportunity of annexing the territory of the Arab part of Palestine, which is now occupied by Transjordan.

In granting economic aid and arms to Israel, the US and Britain reckon, with some justification, that the State of Israel will play a significant part in their anti-Soviet aggressive plans in the Middle East.

In light of this, Israel is becoming important for us in the Middle East. That is why we need to unmask completely the Anglo-American intrigues in Israel and the Israeli government's domestic and pro-American foreign policies which run counter to the interests of the people. Our press still reacts only rarely to facts of this sort, merely publishing occasional remarks.

At the same time, we must increase our distribution of accurate information about the USSR (the work of VOKS, etc.). The Americans and British conduct large-scale propaganda in Israel, opening large libraries, reading rooms, exhibitions etc., with no expense spared; but our hands are tied by the limited resources allocated to VOKS.

Bearing in mind that from inside Israel it is possible to collect information not only about the country itself, but also about the Near East and other countries owing to the Israelis' very substantial links with Jews of almost every country, we ought to augment the legation staff with four or five diplomatic posts and send a trade counsellor with two or three departmental specialists. This could significantly widen the scope of our educational activity.

USSR Minister in Israel
P. Ershov

353
V.A. Zorin to P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.089, OP.26, P.33, D.78, L.55.
Moscow, 3 April 1951

To the Soviet Minister,

We think it will serve no useful purpose to make another official approach to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, since it is unlikely that such a *démarche* would be successful.[1] We know that you have already drawn the attention of the secretary-general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry to such publications in the Israeli press,[2] and it is possible that the appearance of the article 'On the Same Subject' in the newspaper *Yediot aharanot* is an answer to your *démarche* to Eytan.[3] Therefore, it is preferable that the Soviet press give an appropriate rebuttal of the libellous outbursts in the Israeli press. If, after the publication of this material in the Soviet press, representatives of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs approach you officially, you must answer that Soviet newspapers have the right to speak out freely and to express the views of different groups in Soviet society on current events in various countries. Among such countries the press can, of course, write about Israel, especially since the Israeli press systematically prints every possible fabrication about the Soviet Union and even indulges in hostile outbursts against the Soviet government and the Soviet legation in Israel. This, naturally, can not help but evoke an appropriate reaction by the Soviet public.

354
Z. Argaman to A. Levavi (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2492/16B
Moscow, 4 April 1951

Following are some comments in the wake of the last mail and on current affairs.

a) Since I first wrote you about being in touch with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs I have had two meetings with Shchiborin. I described one of them in

---

1. On 19 March 1951 Ershov requested Moscow's consent to visit Sharett and protest against Israeli press publications directed against the Soviet legation (AVP RF, f.053, op.26, p.58, d.361, l.89).
2. Reference is to the Ershov–Eytan meeting of 12 March 1951.
3. In this article of 16 March 1951, the author asked rhetorically,
   > If Mr. Ershov and his colleagues view their political activity here as normal, why is our legation in Moscow not allowed to do the same and to 'expand'? Why have they exiled Jewish writers to Siberia just for visiting our legation? Why have they closed their country to our minister [Shazar] whom they suspect of symbolizing Zionism and the Hebrew language in Russia? Why do the representatives of the Soviet legation [in Israel] have rights which are not accorded to our representatives in Russia? (AVP RF, f.059, op.21, p.58, d.361, l.89).

my letter to you of 20 February 1951, No. 1/23,[1] and I cabled you about the second on 25 February 1951 in our 629.[2]

The second meeting, which was arranged urgently at my request, afforded no time for a broad conversation on Israeli affairs. By chance, we touched only on the question of Hebrew, and he was interested to know what success we were having in teaching the language to new immigrants. Naturally, he wanted to know what the difference was between the Ashkenazi and Sephardi pronunciation.[3]

The meeting lasted only about ten minutes, and we agreed to meet for a more extensive talk. For purely technical reasons we have not held it until now, and in a phone call with him yesterday we arranged to meet next week.

It is clear from the above that I have not delayed the talk, and will hold it next week.

b) You are aware, from my cable No. 638,[4] of the results of my talk with Eremin, deputy minister of foreign trade.

The conversation lasted about 40 minutes. I explained to him our desire to trade with the Soviet Union on a barter basis. I told him that before we could present detailed proposals I would like to know whether the Soviet government would agree in principle to exchange certain goods, which I listed on the spot. I noted also that until now, for reasons unknown to us, our offers to purchase wheat and timber, and to sell citrus fruit, had been rejected.

I interlaced my remarks with [an explanation of] our many needs in connection with the project of massive immigrant absorption, and I told him about the scale of our construction in establishing the state.

He noted in his reply that the Soviet Union did not usually conduct trade on a barter basis unless there was a trade agreement with another country. In such an agreement the sides stated the types of goods each was ready to accept from the other. In the negotiations that took place regarding this kind of accord the sides usually made concessions to each other on the types of goods that constituted the subject of the agreement.

This is not to say that the Ministry of Foreign Trade was uninterested in trade relations that were not based on an agreement, but in that case the only possibility would be to put forward separate proposals regarding each type of merchandise, whether for buying or for selling, to the relevant departments.

Every proposal on the sale of goods to the Soviet Union must include full details concerning the type, quality and price of each item, and the method of supply.

---

1. Filed under ISA 130.11/2942/16a.
2. Argaman reported in his cable that he had transmitted Israel's demands for reparations from Germany (see Editorial Note, p. 684). Shchiborin did not make any substantial comment, but said that he would refer the matter to his superiors (see Argaman to Eytan, 25 Feb. 1951, ISA 130.09/2325/6).
3. The pronunciation of Hebrew by the Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jewish communities in the Diaspora differed. With the establishment of the Zionist enterprise in Palestine at the end of the nineteenth century, it was decided to accept the Sephardi pronunciation as the normative one.
4. This telegram has not been traced.

The same arrangement, apart from the price, existed regarding proposals of purchase from the Soviet Union. The proposals could be submitted directly to the directors of the departments or through them. Each department would examine the proposal in terms of its usefulness and profitability, and would reply accordingly.

He emphasized that we should not construe the rejection of our proposals until now as unwillingness to buy from us or to sell us goods. On the contrary, the Soviet Union was interested in trading with us no less than with any other country. He conjectured that the rejections were due solely to the objective inability at the time to supply us the requested goods, but there was no doubt that every department would treat sympathetically any proposal we made.

Following your instructions, I did not touch on the question of a trade agreement. However, Eremin twice noted the advantages accruing to a trade agreement, and my impression from his remarks was that the Soviet government would view favourably the opening of negotiations on a trade agreement. I did my diplomatic best to evade this question, making do only with an incidental comment that our situation did not yet permit us to enter into commercial commitments of the scale and dimensions that were appropriate to trade with the Soviet Union, and we would like in the meantime to reach a provisional barter agreement.

Unfortunately, to this day I have not had a reply to my cable 638 in which I requested instructions. In my view, separate proposals should be made to the relevant departments even if this does not produce immediate results.

I await, then, appropriate instructions together with all the data relating to each case – that is, in connection with a purchase offer: type and quality of the item, quantity, delivery time and method of sale.[5]

In the case of a sale offer – the price, in addition to all of the above.

Unfortunately, to date the Economic Division has not supplied me with these data.

[...][6]

d) Occasionally we listen to the broadcasts of Kol Zion Lagola,[7] and find that the content is for the most part interesting and is certainly likely to interest the listeners here. The parts edited by Gross-Zimmerman are especially appealing. As far as our reports indicate, many here habitually listen to these broadcasts. Arokh's articles on his visit to Odessa and the conversation on 'Vostochny 2'[8] noted the fact of Jews listening in.

---

5. Levavi instructed Argaman to sound out the Soviet side on whether they would agree to an exchange of goods, and not to pursue talks on a trade agreement (telegram of 15 Feb. 1951, ISA 130.09/2325/5).
6. The third, fifth and sixth paragraphs, dealing with procedural matters, have been omitted by the editors.
7. Hebrew: The Voice of Zion to the Diaspora, a government-run radio station broadcasting to Jewish communities abroad. For its transmissions to Soviet Jewry see Ro'i, *The Struggle for Jewish Emigration*, pp. 44, 47, 51.
8. A state agricultural farm outside the city.

We will do our best to obtain information on listeners' reactions. Reception is generally quite good, although sometimes there is interference – but this is 'natural' interference, not man-made.

[...]

Sincerely,

Argaman

355
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.26, P.58, D.361, LL.115–18.
Tel Aviv, 11 April 1951

Riftin informed me that on 8 and 10 April there had been a session of the Knesset Foreign Affairs Committee, at which the frontier conflict between Israel and Syria was discussed.[1] The committee heard speeches by Yadin, the chief of the general staff, and Eytan, the director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Yadin said that the conflict in the al-Hama region had arisen because of the disloyal attitude of the Arab police in this village towards the representatives of the Jewish Agency who went there and were greeted with stones and verbal abuse. Soon after this incident in al-Hama, a detachment of police was sent there in two trucks. They were fired on from Syrian territory. Israel responded by bombing positions of the Syrian frontier guard and by destroying four Arab villages, of which two had been abandoned by the Arabs, who fled to Syria while the Arab population of the two other villages had already been transported to the interior of Israel. Yadin said that Syria was trying to establish the frontier through the middle of the Jordan River, Lake Hula and the Sea of Galilee.

In his speech Eytan observed that in conversation with him, the representatives of the US, Britain and France had shown interest in three questions:

1) the resettlement of Arabs from the demilitarized zone in the interior of the country;

2) the bombing of Syrian positions;

3) the destruction of Arab settlements.[2]

---

1. Incidents on the Israeli–Syrian frontier and in the demilitarized zone began in the wake of Syrian armed opposition to Israeli drainage works in the central demilitarized zone near the Banat Yakub bridge. In the course of the conflict and in order to demonstrate its sovereignty, Israel evacuated and later destroyed several Arab villages in the demilitarized zone, whose inhabitants either fled to Syria or had been transferred earlier into mainland Israel. On 4–5 April the exchanges of fire deteriorated into a large-scale conflict, and Israel sent an armed reconnaissance patrol into the al-Hama region, in the southern demilitarized zone. This patrol encountered tough Syrian resistance, lost seven people and was extricated with the assistance of aerial bombing.
2. For diplomatic activity following the al-Hama incident see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 6, pp. 215–17, 226–31.

All three representatives recommended caution and let it be understood that the London Declaration of 25 May 1950[3] was in its own way a guarantee of borders in the Middle East. The French minister proposed that France act as mediator in this conflict. The American ambassador Davis made the point that Israel's actions could adversely affect the US attitude to the country. The British minister's position was reserved and polite. Eytan did not say what response he had given to the questions and recommendations of the representatives of the three powers. To the question of whether the Soviet legation had asked for explanations about this conflict, Eytan said no, and added that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had not considered it necessary to inform the Soviet legation.

Eytan went on to speak about the telegram from Abba Eban, Israel's ambassador in the US, in which it was said that the bombing of Syrian positions and the destruction of Arab settlements had made an unfavourable impression in the US and was an obstacle to the implementation of Israel's financial policy in the US ([efforts to attain] an 'independence loan' and a subsidy of 150 million dollars).[4] The UN representatives of a number of states asked Eban about the causes of the conflict, about Israel's interest in the matter and Israel's attitude to Syria in general. The representatives of Turkey and Yugoslavia were particularly active in this regard.

Eytan said that Eban had been instructed to make it clear to members of the Security Council and other representatives at the UN that the drainage of the swamps near Lake Hula was a vitally important matter for Israel, which it could not forgo. As for relations with Syria, Israel was interested in the earliest possible settlement of the conflict and in the conclusion of a peace treaty with Syria and with other Arab states.

When this was discussed in the committee, almost all its members took part. The representatives of Mapam had criticized the government's decision to bomb Syrian territory and to destroy Arab villages, and also the fact that the government had not reacted to Davis' crude interference and threats. Other members of the committee observed that the government had begun too late to negotiate the acquisition of land in the demilitarized zone and termination of the British concession for draining the Hula swamps, which stipulated that one-third of the land must be granted to the Arabs.

At the end of the discussion, Ben-Gurion spoke, saying that the bombing of Syrian positions had been carried out as a show of strength not only to Syria but also to other Arab states. Israel would resist Syria's intentions to draw the frontier at the Jordan River by all possible means. If this was supported by the

---

3. The Tripartite Declaration (see Doc. 321 and n. 2 there).
4. See Eban's telegram of 7 April 1951, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 6, No. 111, pp. 227–8. Reference is to the Israel Independence Bond issue ($500,000,000) which was viewed as the largest single potential source of funds for the government's development program, and to the request made by Israel to the US government for grant-in-aid, which was submitted on 2 March 1951. See also Doc. 342 and n. 2 there.

Americans, Israel would even quarrel with them, although this was undesirable given the friendly attitude of the US towards Israel. The prime minister repeated that the Israeli government was aiming to establish friendly relations with the USSR, but had not received an appropriate answer to a number of approaches made to the USSR. The government had no claims against the USSR, but would protest against the fact that Soviet Jews did not have the same right to help Israel as the Jews did in the US. Other questions dealt with by Ben-Gurion are of no interest.

Two questions are to be discussed at the next session of the committee:

1) the arrest of Zionist leaders in Romania,[5] and

2) McGhee's negotiations with the government of Israel.[6]

The latter issue has long been on the committee's agenda but has been constantly postponed at the government's request.

Ershov

356
Z. Argaman to A. Levavi (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/6
Moscow, 29 April 1951

(a) We returned from Tbilisi last night. On the eve of the seventh day of Passover I prayed in the Georgian Jews' Great Synagogue. I spoke with many Jews, including the *hakham*.[1] The following day I prayed at the synagogue of the Russian Jews. I was called to the Tora and read the *haftara*, and at the request of the rabbi and the head of the executive organ[2] I also attended a Sabbath reception. The head of the Ashkenazi community is a rabbi from Nikolaev who also serves as the cantor and the rabbi of the Georgian community. Everywhere we went we were met with great cordiality. The Jews, especially the Georgian Jews, feel greater security and less fear than [the Jews] in Moscow and other localities. We met and conversed with many Jews from both communities. Many, especially the Ashkenazi, listen regularly to Kol Zion Lagola.[3] We visited the ethnographic museum of Georgian Jewry[4] and spent

Doc. 355

5. See Doc. 231.
6. George McGhee, US assistant secretary of state for the Near East, South Asia and Africa, visited Israel from 27–28 March. He met with the prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 6, No. 99, pp. 199–205).

Doc. 356

1. Title of the leader of Jewish religious communities in Georgia.
2. See Doc. 271, n. 1.
3. See Doc 354, n. 7.
4. Apart from a few active synagogues, this was the only Jewish institution that remained open in the USSR after the closure of Jewish theatres in 1949.

three hours there in the company of the director and his deputy, both Georgian Jews. I met with the deputy again the next morning, an educated man who speaks fluent Hebrew. There are contradictory asssessments of the number of Jews in the city. According to the Georgian Jews, the Jewish community, including the Ashkenazi, numbers about fifteen thousand; according to the Ashkenazi Jews, including veteran residents, the Ashkenazi community alone numbers about twelve thousand and the Georgian community is larger than that. The Georgian and the Ashkenazi communities are each registered with the authorities as Jewish religious communities. In Tbilisi we also met with Christian Georgians, among them Professor Shekidze,[5] a philologist and historian who reads Hebrew and Arabic. We heard a great deal about the life of the Jews of Tbilisi and Georgia in general, about their desire to immigrate to Israel and more – as noted in the letter.

(b) The Protocol Department wishes to be informed of the planned date of Eliashiv's arrival.

(c) Take note of the maps in *Literaturnaia gazeta* of the 28th.[6]

Argaman

357
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.26, P.58, D.361, L.115
Tel Aviv, 30 April 1951

I think it would be inexpedient to send a telegram of greetings this year from Comrade Shvernik on the occasion of Independence Day.[1] The State of Israel, which gained its independence three years ago, has in large measure lost it by joining the imperialist camp of the US and Britain. This year the government of Israel is marking Independence Day with greater celebration in the US than in its own state. Four ministers have already left for the US, and Prime Minister

---

Doc. 356

5. No such figure has been traced. Argaman may have been referring to the philologist and university professor Akaki Shanidze.
6. On 28 April 1951 *Literaturnaia gazeta* published an article entitled 'The Black Web of US Military Bases', which included a map taken from *Schweizer Illustrierte Zeitung* (28 March 1951) indicating the location of US military bases in Western Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. Three of the bases shown on this map were located in Israel.

Doc. 357

1. On 8 April 1951, Soviet Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Zorin sent an urgent telegram to Ershov asking his opinion as to whether Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium N. Shvernik should send a congratulatory telegram on the occasion of the third anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel (see AVP RF, f.059, op.6, p.33, d.178, l.76).

Ben-Gurion will be going there in a few days' time.[2] The negotiations which he will conduct with the US administration about the so-called independence loan and the grant-in-aid of 150 million dollars[3] are bound to result in a number of new concessions by Israel and in a further loss of independence. The Israeli attitude to the USSR has become hostile. Anti-Soviet propaganda is carried out systematically and on an ever-wider scale.

Ershov

358
Memorandum on Soviet–Israeli Talks on the Transfer of Russian Property in Israel to the Soviet Union

COPY: AVP RF, F 089, OP.4, P.10, D.27, LL.31–4
[Moscow] 8 May 1951
Secret

In carrying out the resolution of the USSR Council of Ministers of 31 May 1950 on Russian property in Israel, the minister of the USSR in Israel, Comrade Ershov, delivered a note to the Foreign Ministry of Israel on 6 June 1950[1] regarding expedition of the Israeli government's transfer of all Russian property to the jurisdiction of representatives of the Soviet Union. The note of 6 June 1950 was a reply to the Israeli note of 19 August 1949.[2]

Until October 1950, the Foreign Ministry of Israel did not react at all to our note of 6 June 1950.

At the same time, one could conclude from Comrade Ershov's conversations with Israeli officials that the Israeli government was dragging out the solution to the problem of transferring Russian property to its rightful owners. Thus, for example, on 7 June 1950, Eliashiv, the former director of the East European Division of the Foreign Ministry of Israel, told Comrade Ershov that, in his opinion, it was advisable to resolve the property issue subsequent to the discussion of the Jerusalem issue at the fifth UN General Assembly session. In his words, it was difficult for the government of Israel to consider the Soviet

---

Doc. 357

2. Ben-Gurion visited the US from 3 to 31 May to participate in the Israel Bonds campaign. On 4 and 8 May he met with President Truman and held talks with George Marshall and Averell Harriman.
3. See Doc. 355 and n. 4 there.

Doc. 358

1. The note was telegraphed from Moscow by Deputy Foreign Minister Lavrent'ev on 5 June 1950 (see AVP RF, f.059, op.24, p.27, d.154, l.85).
2. See Doc. 346, n. 2.

property question taking into account the interests of the USSR, before the Jerusalem question had been resolved.

In connection with the Israeli government's position, Comrade Ershov was instructed to deliver a new note in October 1950, reminding Israel of the need to expedite a reply to our note of 6 June 1950.

On 5 October 1950, the USSR mission delivered a new note on the issue to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[3]

On 20 October 1950 the director of the East European Division of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Levavi, invited Comrade Rozhkov, first secretary of the Soviet mission, for a conversation and said that he had done so in order to convey to the government of the USSR the Israeli government's viewpoint on the Russian property issue.[4]

According to him [Levavi], the Israeli government stated that its principled position and attitude towards the Soviet Union's request to transfer the property of the Palestine Society and the late Grand Duke remained unchanged. However, in connection with the UN General Assembly decision of December 1949 about the internationalization of Jerusalem, the Israeli government currently did not consider it possible to resolve the issue in practice, and it was putting it off until the UN General Assembly's final decision on the question of Jerusalem ([in the register of incoming documents] No. 2894 of 4 November 1950).

As directed by the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the USSR chargé d'affaires in Israel, Comrade Mukhin, visited Israeli Foreign Minister Sharett, on 14 [January],[5] and, alluding to Rozhkov's conversation with Levavi of 20 October 1950, made a statement on the property issue, declaring that he considered totally unjustified Israel's intention, about which Levavi had spoken, of postponing the actual transfer of 'Russian property' to us.

Comrade Mukhin indicated that, in his opinion, the UN General Assembly's resolution of the Jerusalem issue and the Israeli government's satisfaction of the Soviet Union's legitimate demands for the return of property which incontestably belonged to it were completely independent questions, whose resolution could not and should not be linked.

Sharett noted in reply that Israel was very sensitive to the Jerusalem issue; as for the property problem, he had fallen behind on many matters during the assembly session and it was now difficult to formulate his response. He promised, however, to clarify the existing situation in the near future and to return again to the issue.

Comrade Mukhin reminded Sharett that complete agreement had already been reached on the Soviet Union's property rights; however, it seemed from Levavi's statement that the Israeli party was trying to avoid keeping its own commitments instead of carrying out the agreement.

---

3. See Doc. 335, n. 1.
4. See Doc. 336.
5. The original has, erroneously, 14 December; see Doc. 346.

Sharett replied that he regarded the issue as an important one, and he said that Israel was strict about its obligations and commitments and the suitable people would deal with the matter ([entry register] No. 276 of 31 January 1951).

On 19 January 1951, Israeli Foreign Minister Sharett, invited Comrade Mukhin to pay him a call at his home.

Sharett began by saying that, in accordance with Comrade Mukhin's request, he had personally reviewed all the material regarding the Soviet Union's property interests and 'had come to the conclusion that the matter could be advanced'.

Specifically, he promised that he would present his own proposals to the government the following week, and he expressed the hope that a favourable decision would be adopted. He warned that, in the meantime, he was delivering this information informally until the appropriate government decision was taken ([entry register] No. 278/Near and Middle East Department of 31 January 1951).

On 14 February, Comrade Mukhin called on Sharett at his home. Referring to the conversation of 14 [January] 1950, Sharett said that, as he had promised, he had informed the government about the Soviet mission's property requests, and a decision was taken to form a commission composed of three ministers: – justice, finance and foreign affairs – for a final resolution of the issue.

Comrade Mukhin told Sharett that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel had once already had its 'final' say in its note about the transfer of property; however, over two years had passed since then, and the matter had still not been terminated.

Sharett answered: 'Believe me, the matter is moving ahead, and I hope to inform you of the results very soon ([entry register] No. 525/ Near and Middle East Department of 8 March 1951).'

Prepared by K. Zotov

359
Z. Argaman to W. Eytan (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/6
Moscow, 18 May 1951

Re your 508.[1] This evening I visited Shchiborin and explained matters in accordance with your 13073. I expressed my confidence that the position of the Soviet Union was consistent with our position, and I requested opposition by their representative in the Security Council to the West's motion, adding that because time was so pressing it might be useful if their representative would request a postponement in order to enable an additional, thorough review. He asked what information I had concerning the prospects of the draft resolution passing and if my visit had come at my government's express instruction. I replied that I had no information about the prospects and that I was in fact acting under an explicit instruction. He took an interest in the details and promised to convey immediately the fact of my visit and my request. He was extremely friendly.

Argaman

360
D. Tesler to the Israeli Legation in the USSR

COPY: ISA 130.11/2502/8
Tel Aviv, 20 May 1951

For your information,

The first secretary of the Soviet legation came to our office last week to introduce the new second secretary, Raevskii. They visited [the East European] division, the Protocol Division and the Consular Division.

Mr. Rozhkov brought up before Mr. Avnon the question of the procedure for issuing exit permits to Soviet citizens wishing to return to the Soviet Union. Mr. Avnon gave a short résumé of the procedure, but Rozhkov said they would be glad if the Consular Division agreed to undertake the handling of this subject. Mr. Rozhkov said their intention was to submit a few dozen cases at a time to the Consular Division, which would refer every case to the Ministry of Immigration. When Mr. Avnon commented that it would be preferable if all

1. Eytan instructed Argaman to explain to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs Israel's objection to a draft resolution tabled in the Security Council by the Western powers calling upon Israel, *inter alia*, to cease drainage work in the Hula and to repatriate the Arabs expelled from villages in the area. Argaman was requested to ask for Soviet support against that wording. For the resolution as approved, see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 6, Editorial Note, pp. 327–9. The USSR abstained in the final vote.

concerned approached the Ministry of Immigration directly, Mr. Rozhkov replied that they would prefer the cases not to be dealt with individually but between themselves and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As to exemption from military service, which is a precondition for the issue of an exit permit, Mr. Rozhkov said that their citizens did not serve in foreign armies and they categorically refused to let any Soviet citizen serve in the Israeli army; as far as he knew, there was not a single Soviet citizen now in the army, so the issue was anyway irrelevant.[1]

Mr. Avnon explained that apart from regular service there was also the problem of reservists who were subject to the military service law, and every single case would have to be dealt with in order to be exempted from army service and in order to obtain an exit permit. Mr. Avnon agreed to have the applications for exit permits submitted through the Consular Division.

Mr. Avnon raised the question of obtaining various documents from the Soviet Union, such as diplomas, birth certificates, divorce [certificates] etc., and asked what the accepted procedure was in the Soviet Union in such cases. Mr. Rozhkov replied that special forms could be obtained at the consular office of the legation, and those wishing to obtain a certificate from the Soviet Union should fill in such a form, which would be transmitted by the legation for appropriate action. We pointed out that we had not succeeded in obtaining even a single certificate by the present procedure. Mr. Rozhkov could not answer this question and said he would try to find out what the reason was and let us know accordingly.

A third issue discussed in this talk was the problem of the endorsement of documents intended for dispatch to the Soviet Union. The [USSR] legation had been refusing of late to endorse Mr. Avnon's signature on immigration certificates which were sent by residents of Israel to their relatives in the Soviet Union in accordance with the local authorities' regulations for the issue of exit permits and passports for those wishing to emigrate to Israel.

Mr. Rozhkov claims that these endorsements are not necessary and they consider them a superfluous duplication of effort. In his opinion, the explanation received at the legation in answer to their question is that immigration certificates are not necessary at all, because these matters are dealt with by the Israeli legation in Moscow. As there is a legation there, the decision as to who may be given an entry visa to Israel lies with it; if any doubt arises, every Soviet citizen may apply to the legation and ensure that he receives such a visa, and then submit to the local authorities the necessary document from the legation confirming that a visa will be issued.

We explained that the procedure in the Soviet Union precluded any contact with Soviet citizens except through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and experience showed that Soviet citizens did not apply to the legation but asked their relatives in Israel to send them immigration certificates directly from here. Mr. Rozhkov promised to re-examine the explanation they had received in writing,

1. See Doc. 310 and n. 8 there.

and he also promised, as we requested, to give us the full explanation in writing.

Mr. Rozhkov thinks there is a misunderstanding here. [Soviet] local authorities are not concerned with entry permits to Israel other than applications endorsed by the legation containing the undertaking that the Soviet citizen, on arrival in Israel, would not find himself homeless and with no means of subsistence – as do many Soviet citizens in Israel. This is the authorities' main concern and the reason for the delay in the department dealing with the departure of their citizens to Israel.

Mr. Avnon commented here that the issue of the immigration certificate itself by the Ministry of Immigration constituted an undertaking that the immigrant was convered on all counts – housing, support on the part of his relatives, etc. Before issuing an immigration certificate, the Ministry of Immigration made a thorough investigation as to whether the relatives could be depended on to support the immigrants, and the certificate was issued only when the ministry was convinced that such was the case.

Yours,

D. Tesler

361
Levavi to the Israeli Legations in Eastern Europe

COPY: ISA 130.02/2410/20
Tel Aviv, 21 May 1951

The conversation [between Sharett and Ershov on 7 May] was held at the request of the minister of foreign affairs and lasted about three-quarters of an hour. The director of the East European Division was present.

The minister of foreign affairs announced that he had sent a cable to the president of the Security Council requesting a special meeting of the Security Council that would react to the Syrians' acts of aggression which had led to fierce fighting in the central demilitarized zone around Tel al-Mutilla.[1] At the minister's request, the president of the Security Council will convey the contents of the cable to the council members, and thus Mr. Iakov Malik will be acquainted with the precise description of the events contained in the cable.[2] At the same time, the minister of foreign affairs would be grateful if the

1. On 2 May tensions along the Israeli–Syrian border resumed, with clashes between Israeli and Syrian forces in the vicinity of Tel al-Mutilla. Sporadic exchanges of fire deteriorated into a full-scale battle. A cease-fire agreement imposed by the UN on 4 May was ignored. Hostilities ceased only on 6 May, when all Syrian forces were driven out of Israeli territory. Israeli forces suffered 40 dead and many wounded.
2. See M. Sharett to the President of the Security Council, 7 May 1951, in *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 6, No. 159, pp. 289–93.

minister would convey the contents of said cable, a copy of which was made available to him, to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as a description of the events and their background, as explained by the minister of foreign affairs on this occasion.

The minister of foreign affairs related how, after driving back the Arab forces that had entrenched themselves at Tel al-Mutilla in non-demilitarized Israeli territory, Israeli forces had found incontestable proof on the ground showing clearly that on the Arab side regular Syrian troops had taken part and that the Arabs had used Syrian army supplies and equipment. The minister of foreign affairs listed several of the items which had been found, ranging from boxes of ammunition and rifles in use by the Syrian army and labeled in part with the units' names, to cigarettes from Syrian army canteens. The minister of foreign affairs noted that some objects had been photographed and that UN observers had counter-signed the photographs. The battle for Tel al-Mutilla thus marks a peak in Syrian aggression, since it has been proven that the Syrian army not only infiltrated the demilitarized zone but entrenched itself within non-demilitarized Israeli territory – until driven out after a difficult battle.

However, this development should be seen as the latest manifestation of a fundamental Syrian trend which has already caused a series of killings and acts of violence, and which is preventing the establishment of peace in the demilitarized zones on the border. The removal of Arab civilians from those zones, which we were forced to carry out at a certain stage of this process, was by no means the beginning of the affair but only one link in the chain of events.

The minister of foreign affairs noted that after the First World War, when the British and French mandatory governments were being established in the Middle East, controversy over the boundary between Palestine and Syria had already existed. The French then claimed a border according to the water line, which would run through Lake Hula and the Sea of Galilee. The British demanded the inclusion of these bodies of water and their sources within the territory of Palestine by demarcating the border on the eastern shore. This is Palestine's only major source of water, whereas Syria has many rich sources. On this subject the [former] British interest and our interest coincided. In fact, Britain, as the stronger partner, had been able to overcome the demand of the French, and the boundary was set accordingly. The Syrians are now renewing the struggle by aggressive means and are moving into areas which are not theirs, while undermining the armistice treaty.

For this reason, the minister [of foreign affairs] has lodged a strongly-worded demand with the French minister that his government approach the Syrian government in an effort to dissuade it from its aim of reviving the territorial debate and endeavouring to prevail by means of aggression. This, of course, the minister of foreign affairs told the Soviet minister in confidence.

Yet even after the expulsion of the Syrians from Tel al-Mutilla, a state of tension continues to prevail, with the possibility of a renewed flare-up if Syria

is not warned in the most vigorous manner and told to desist from all open or disguised activity liable to undermine peace and security in the demilitarized areas. As he was drawing up his cable to the president of the Security Council, the minister of foreign affairs was informed that our observers at Ein Gev had spotted dozens of armed troops from Syrian territory moving towards the small Arab village of Nuqeib, which is in the demilitarized zone north of Ein Gev. Indeed, Ein Gev had already been fired at from there, and some bullets had hit houses, including the children's house of the kibbutz.

The Soviet minister accompanied the minister's remarks with brief comments, facial expressions and movements of his head, which were intended to show that he understood but did not accept the explanations. This was also how he reacted, for example, when the minister referred to the removal of Arab civilians from the area. After the minister of foreign affairs concluded his presentation, the minister asked him a number of questions. He asked whether General Riley had already ruled at the time on the question of draining the Hula Valley, and the minister explained briefly the contents of General Riley's memorandum and the opinion he had conveyed at a later date.[3] On this occasion the Soviet minister learned, apparently for the first time, that General Riley had suffered burns to his legs in a hospital in Israel due to a mistake made by a nurse.

In reply to another question of the minister, the minister of foreign affairs noted that the Arab states were not displaying readiness for peace with Israel, due to a false hope that Israel would fall apart as a result of the economic difficulties brought on by limitless immigration, and that the day would come when either Israel would be ready to accept unconditional peace terms, or that there would be no need to make peace in order to obtain what the Arab states wanted.

To another question by the minister, who noted that in part the clashes had not necessarily occurred in the area where the Hula was being drained, the foreign minister explained to him, using a map, the exact geographic location of the three demilitarized zones on the Israeli–Syrian border.

* * *

The minister of foreign affairs then moved on to another subject, namely an article by Kudriavtsev in *Izvestiia*, stating, among other points, that an important result of McGhee's visit to the Middle East was an agreement on the signing of a defence pact between Turkey and Israel. The minister noted that

---

3. Reference is apparently to Riley's letter to the chairman of the Israel–Syria Mixed Armistice Commission of 5 March. Riley stated that contrary to Syrian claims, he did not consider the Israeli projects in the demilitarized zone as upsetting the military balance. He accepted, however, the Syrian claim that lands in this zone should not be expropriated, and that work should be stopped until the issue was resolved between Syria and Israel (letter filed under ISA 130.02/2433/5). In a meeting with Israeli representatives prior to the discussion of this matter in the Security Council, he somewhat mitigated his opinions, insisting on settling the dispute through the Mixed Armistice Commission (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 6, No. 143, pp. 266–7).

he did not have the original Russian version and that he was translating what Kudriavtsev had written back from our language to Russian. However, if this was, in fact, what the writer meant, the minister of foreign affairs wished to inform the minister that it was groundless and without foundation. It was particularly important for the minister to emphasize this, as the article had been published in such a central and representative paper as *Izvestiia*.

At first the Soviet minister could not recall the article, but then he suddenly remembered it, including even its exact formulation in Russian. He said that the article had not claimed the existence of *soglashenie* (in the minister's translation) regarding a treaty, but *dogovorennost'*. (It should be noted that there are only the slightest differences, if any at all, between these two Russian words, both of which mean agreement, dialogue.)

To this remark the minister of foreign affairs replied that there was no *soglashenie*, no *dogovorennost'* – and not even any *govor* (sound of voices).

The Soviet minister replied that he was glad that this matter existed only in the correspondent's imagination.

* * *

The third topic of conversation was the refusal of the Soviet representatives in Israel to accept the joint invitation of Kibbutz Givat Brenner and the Israel–USSR Friendship Society to attend the Passover *seder* at the kibbutz. The reason given for the refusal was that the party [*sic*] bore a religious character.

The minister of foreign affairs began by saying that his comments on this affair were of course completely personal, but he felt the need to express his regret that the Soviet invitees did not find it possible to accept. The minister explained that Passover was a holiday of national freedom, although it was true that the unique course of Jewish history had caused Jewish national tradition to be preserved in a certain period in religious form. Now the national basis had found full expression, and there was also an important social dimension. The Passover *seder* was also related to a tradition of hospitality, and it was this that had prompted the invitation to the Soviet representatives as the guests of the nation and the country to attend the *seder* at Givat Brenner. Passover was also the celebration of spring, and the kibbutz settlements were trying to imbue the *seder* with a new, relevant content. There had been great interest in these quests for a new form of the holiday. Some had fumbled and come up with inartistic or inappropriate results, but it was already possible to point to many achievements, the fruit of seeking a relevant, innovative form for the Passover *seder* to take. Incidentally, the minister's brother, who was a member of a large kibbutz near Haifa,[4] was also deeply involved in these efforts.

The Soviet minister asked whether it was not true that many guests were usually invited to Givat Brenner, and the minister explained that this had to do

4. Sharett's brother, Yehuda, a member of Kibbutz Yagur, composed and arranged music for a modern Passover *seder*.

with the fact that Givat Brenner was easily accessible in terms of transportation and that within Givat Brenner the farming, social, and cultural institutions were relatively close together, so they could be conveniently toured.

As for a possible invitation to a *seder* next year, the minister remarked that they would see about it when the time came.

A. Levavi

362
Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Israeli Legation in the USSR

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/5
Tel Aviv, 23 May 1951

Ershov was asked to see the director-general yesterday. Levavi was also present. The director-general expressed his satisfaction at the Soviet Union's abstention in the voting in the Security Council,[1] and described developments further to the minister's talk with Ershov of 7 May.[2] He explained our stand against the biased and unjust resolution which rewarded aggression. Draining the Hula was a vital necessity. We did not interpret [the resolution as saying] that we have to stop the work on Jewish lands, and Syria had no say regarding the lands in the ownership of Arab residents [of the demilitarized zone]. Ershov also inquired about our position on the claim concerning the Arabs evicted from the area.

[...][3]

363
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett (Tel Aviv, 25 May 1951)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.26, P.58, D.361, LL.174–8

On 25 May I went to see Sharett at his invitation. Sharett said that relations between Israel and Romania had worsened because of a number of arrests of Zionist figures.[1] I interrupted him and said that on this matter he had to approach the chargé d'affaires of the Romanian People's Republic, since there

---

Doc. 362
1. See Doc. 359 and n. 1 there.
2. Doc. 361.
3. The second part of the document, dealing with administrative matters, has been omitted.

Doc. 363
1. See Doc. 339 and n. 2 there.

was no reason for me to be involved in it. Sharett retorted that he understood the formal aspect of the matter, but nevertheless he had to inform me of the state of Israeli–Romanian relations, and he asked me to pass this on to Vyshinskii. Sharett added that at the end of 1949, when there was a delay in the departure of Romanian Jews to Israel, he had spoken to Vyshinskii at Lake Success, after which immigration to Israel resumed 'at full speed'. Sharett pointed out that 50–60 activists in the Zionist movement had been arrested in Romania, but no charges had been brought against them, that there had been no court proceedings and that it all made an unfavourable impression on the Israeli government and Israeli public opinion. He was approaching me about this, because earlier the Israeli minister, and now the chargé d'affaires, had been unable to discuss not only this, but even other minor matters with the responsible officials of the Romanian Foreign Ministry. Whenever the chargé d'affaires asked to see someone, he was sent to the assistant of the director of the Protocol Department.

Most recently, officials of the Israeli legation had not even been received in Sovromtrans,[2] where they were supposed to pay the bills for the emigrants' travel expenses. The Israeli government had sent the Romanian government a number of official notes on the subject, but there had been no reply. Sharett repeated that these facts made a bad impression. I observed that the main feature of Israeli–Romanian relations was that Romania was allowing tens of thousands of its citizens to leave for Israel and that the government of Israel should be grateful for that. Sharett answered that permission for Romanian Jews to leave was not a benevolent act of the Romanian government, but simply a desire to get rid of people who did not approve of their regime. I replied that this opinion was not reflected in reality.

In conclusion, Sharett said that in order to normalize Israeli–Romanian relations, it would be necessary to release the arrested Zionists and send them to Israel. I answered that this question was an internal matter for the Romanian People's Republic.

Sharett then said that in its 'International Survey' section *Pravda* of 13 May had printed a comment headed 'Israel Is an American Possession'. According to this article, Ben-Gurion's trip to the US 'completes a certain stage in the transformation of Israel to an American fiefdom, and is intended to prepare the groundwork for the even broader and more rapid "assimilation" of Israel by the American military clique'. Sharett went on:

> I can say with complete conviction that the prime minister has not conducted and is not conducting any military negotiations with the US, nor has he the authority to negotiate about any bases or the like. The article mentioned McGhee's visit to Israel,[3] and I am obliged to explain that McGhee left Israel with two impressions: first, he was convinced of the very substantial building and construction work

2. Russian acronym for the Soviet–Romanian shipping company, formed within the agreement between the USSR and East European states for joint enterprises (see Doc. 224, n. 2).
3. See Doc. 355, n. 6.

going on in Israel, and second, he saw that this construction was outstripping the development of the Arab countries and must therefore be restrained. The result of this impression was the American resolution on the Syrian–Israeli conflict and the Security Council resolution which followed it.[4] The statement by such an authoritative paper as Pravda worried us, because the erroneous information which it used could make millions of people think that Israel really was an American possession.

I heard Sharett out and replied:

1) I had taken note of his statement that the prime minister was not conducting any military negotiations in the US and did not have the authority to negotiate on such matters as military bases and the like.

2) This was the third complaint that Mr. Sharett had allowed himself to make to me about statements in the Soviet press. The Soviet press reacted to current affairs in various countries, including Israel, the more so since the Israeli press was publishing libellous fabrications against the Soviet Union every day and was making hostile attacks against the Soviet government and the Soviet legation in Israel. I had brought this to the attention of the Israeli Foreign Ministry three times, but nothing had been done about it. The Israeli press continued publishing libellous falsifications about the Soviet Union.

The last time I spoke about this with Eytan was in March, when I pointed out that such attacks on the Soviet legation were intolerable. But no steps had been taken, and therefore a week later the newspaper *Yediot aharonot* printed an article entitled 'On the Same Subject', in which we find everything lumped together: first, an attack on Stalin, the head of the Soviet government, and then on the Soviet legation and the Soviet minister. We could conclude from this that the government of Israel was deliberately consenting to this hostile slander and did not want to take any measures to halt it.

Sharett was obviously put out by this reaction to his complaint and he began to say that attacks on the Soviet legation were probably a reaction to anti-government statements made by opposition party leaders in the presence of representatives of the legation. I answered that there had been no such statements, and the leaders of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR knew very well that Israeli government policy must not be discussed in the presence of representatives of the legation. After this Sharett said that everyone in Israel was criticizing the government and expecting it to fall. I said that this was of no interest to me, since it was an internal matter for the State of Israel, but I needed to know what the government of Israel would do to stop this anti-Soviet propaganda. Sharett answered that under present circumstances it would be very difficult for him to do anything, but that he would try to influence the press.

---

4. See Doc. 359, n. 1.

364
Meeting: P.I. Ershov and M.P Kalugin – M. Sharett (Tel Aviv, 2 June 1951)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.26, D.361, L.179

On 1 June I called on Sharett and introduced Kalugin.[1] After he had examined Kalugin's credentials, Sharett said that the legation's note about the property had been considered at a meeting of the government commision,[2] which had now finished its work and had submitted a number of proposals to the government. Sharett did not say what these proposals were, but he remarked that the property issue was a complicated and difficult one. According to Sharett, the government would discuss the committee's proposals when Ben-Gurion returned to Israel from the US in a week's time. Sharett thought that the government would reach a decision in two or three weeks. I made the point to Sharett that it was necessary to hasten the transfer of the property in accordance with promises made earlier by the Foreign Ministry and the minister himself. Sharett said that he was not going back on his promises but repeated that the property question was very complicated.[3] He added that the matter would be considered at the second, or at the latest, the third, government meeting after the prime minister's arrival.

Ershov

---

1. M.P. Kalugin, representative of the Russian Palestine Society attached to the USSR Academy of Sciences, arrived in Israel in April 1951.
2. This committee comprised officials of the Ministries of Finance, Foreign Affairs and Justice. It was established in accordance with a government decision of 8 February 1951 (ISA 130.11/2501/18; AVP RF, f.059, op.26, p.58, d.361, l.41). See also Doc. 358.
3. On 15 May 1951 the legal advisor of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a secret memorandum to Sharett which read:

   > According to instructions of the British Foreign Office, the British legation yesterday submitted to me a copy of notes exchanged in the years 1946–48 (before the end of the Mandate) between the British government and the government of the Soviet Union regarding the lease of Russian property in Palestine. The materials were sent to me 'for private use' in the hope that 'I would not miss the deadline'. These documents contain 21 pages which require careful study. At first glance it seems that they complicate the legal situation. I can not yet judge to what extent this odd conduct on the part of the British entangles the political implications of the matter. Given this latest development I would like to urge postponing any additional action in the matter until, together with the attorney-general, I am able to draw legal consequences from this new material.

   Sharett endorsed the letter and addressed it to the East European Division (ISA 130.11/2501/19).

365
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sneh (Tel Aviv, 14 June 1951)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.4, P 9, D.7, LL.61–5
Secret

Sneh told me that on the previous day the Israeli government had sent instructions to Eban, its ambassador in Washington, to sign an agreement with the US on friendship, trade and navigation, which had been under discussion for the past year. The text of the agreement would not be submitted for discussion in the Knesset, but might be published later.[1] The completion of negotiations on this agreement was one of the results of Ben-Gurion's trip to the US.[2] Sneh said that he had read in an American paper some excerpts from the memoirs of McDonald, former American ambassador to Israel, which were being prepared for publication. The book should have come out already, but for some reason publication had been delayed.[3] McDonald said that at the conference of American diplomats in Istanbul early in 1951, a Middle East pact had been discussed, and it had been established that the US was not prepared to support such a pact with arms or money.[4] It had therefore been decided that the United States should aim to reach separate agreements with the countries of the Middle East, all of which would thus be closely linked to the US. The agreement between the US and Israel on friendship, trade and navigation was a first step in implementing the decisions of the Istanbul conference.

Another result of Ben-Gurion's trip was an agreement on oil, which he had apparently concluded with the American oil trusts. It was indicative that Bartley Crum, Rockefeller's legal advisor, had come to Israel after Ben-Gurion's return. There was also indirect confirmation of this in Blaustein's negotiations with Assistant Secretary of State McGhee, the son-in-law of De Collier, a director and shareholder of ARAMCO, the largest oil company.[5]

As regards the so-called 'independence loan',[6] Ben-Gurion's visit was basically a failure: it raised only 20 million dollars in ready money, and promises to buy 30–35 million dollars worth of bonds during 1951.

Sneh went on to say that the discussion between the newspapers *Al hamishmar* and *Kol haam* about Bentov's statement in the Knesset was the

---

1. This treaty was signed on 23 August 1951. It was published in the beginning of 1952 by the official bulletin *Kitvei amana*, Vol. 2, pp. 15–29.
2. Cf. Doc 357, n. 2.
3. The book by James McDonald, *My Mission in Israel 1948–1951*, was published in New York in 1951.
4. The conference of the heads of US diplomatic missions in the Middle East took place in Istanbul from 14 to 21 February 1951. For the proceedings, see *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. V, pp. 50–76.
5. Jacob Blaustein, president of the American Jewish Committee and the American Oil Company met with McGhee on 7 May and 11 June 1951. Among the subjects discussed were the immigration of Jews from Iraq, the Hula controversy and Israel's request for grant-in-aid (see *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. V, pp. 663–7, 707–10).
6. See Doc. 355 and n. 4 there.

result of a misunderstanding.[7] Bentov had said that a year ago one of the People's Democracies had offered to sell arms to Israel, but the Israeli government, hoping to get arms in accordance with the declaration of the US, Britain and France of 25 May 1950, had rejected the offer. This statement was understood to mean that arms from the People's Democracies were going to the Arabs. This was why Mikunis made his statement in the Knesset, that it was not Bentov, but he, Mikunis, who was authorized to speak about arms from the People's Democracies. Sneh said that, in fact, arms purchases, as proposed by Czechoslovakia, had been discussed the previous year at the conference of Israeli heads of missions,[8] when Eliashiv, who was then minister to Czechoslovakia and Hungary, had urged that the purchase be made, but the others had not concurred with him.

Sneh then went on to talk about the results of the Mapam convention,[9] which he rated as positive compared with Mapam's earlier position. For instance, when in 1949 the question of joining the government coalition was discussed, 45 per cent of the Mapam representatives voted to join the coalition unconditionally, but at this convention, 100 per cent voted to stipulate conditions for joining the government which were identical, according to Sneh, to those proposed by Jacques Duclos for the French Communist Party. At its own separate meeting at the time of the convention, the Ahdut Haavoda group discussed the possibility of leaving Mapam, but about forty delegates strongly opposed this; they said that if there was a schism, they would remain in the party. Among these delegates was Dorman, who had attended Nenni's Socialist Party Conference in Italy.

Sneh said that at present the centre faction of Mapam had reached its limit at the convention and could not move any further to the left. Sneh therefore takes the view that leftist elements must now create a nucleus which, without becoming a fraction, could push the entire party to the left.

As for yesterday's elections to the Zionist Congress,[10] Sneh said that the voters had shown considerable passivity. In Israel as a whole about 35 per cent of the electorate had voted, but in Tel Aviv the figure was only 28 per cent. Sneh said that perhaps these were the last elections to a Zionist congress In

---

7. Mapam MK Bentov made his statement on 29 May 1951, in the course of a political debate on the Security Council resolution regarding the Hula works (see *Divrei haknesset*, Vol. IX, pp. 1877–80).
8. See Doc. 326 and n. 1 there.
9. The second national convention of Mapam took place in Haifa from 30 May to 5 June 1951. The convention was marked by a dvision between the left-wing Hashomer Hatsair (numbering 61 per cent of the representatives) and the centrist Ahdut Haavoda faction (35 per cent). Controversy centred on Hashomer Hatzair's insistence on close adherence to the Soviet line, and in particular, on the condemnation of Tito, and on its demand to establish a uniform 'territorial' party, including the Arabs and without autonomous fractions. At the end of the conference the left-wingers prevailed and Ahdut Haavoda grudgingly adhered to the majority line.
10. The elections to the XXIII Zionist Congress took place on 13 June in an atmosphere of general indifference on the part of the Israeli public. Turnout was low, not reaching the 50 per cent mark.

order not to be elected to the congress, Sneh put his name at the very end of the Mapam list, and in order to avoid censure, he had arranged that Galili, one of the most right-wing leaders of Mapam, appear next to him on the list.

Sneh told me that the fabrications directed against the USSR and the People's Democracies which had appeared recently in the press were invented by the Israeli Foreign Ministry, and were published either unsigned or 'from a special correspondent'. He knew for certain that the report in today's *Jerusalem Post* about the expulsion of 40 thousand 'unproductive Jews and non-Jews' from Budapest had been written by [Moshe] Walter, the deputy director of the East European Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[11]

Sneh complained that the work of the left-wing elements in Mapam was hindered by lack of understanding by the communists. For instance, the previous week, the newspaper *Davar* had printed an article saying that the Communist Party's Central Committee had distributed to its sections an instruction to struggle against left-wing elements in Mapam as pseudo-revolutionaries, who were not leading their party to a revolutionary struggle. The Mapam leaders were asking Sneh to write an article against this line. This put him in a difficult position since he did not want to indulge in public polemics and criticism of the Communist Party. *Kol haam,* the Communist Party's own paper, had not even bothered to print a rebuttal of the article in *Davar.* Another example: in his article in *Kol haam* Mikunis engaged in a wholesale attack on all three platforms put forward at the Mapam convention, instead of pointing out that the 'consolidation front' (of the centre and left) was a definite step forward, even if it was quite insufficient and flawed in certain ways. Criticism of that sort would help the left. Sneh also cited the example of the deliberate distortion by Mikunis of Mapam's position, even when it was correct. When the Knesset was discussing the Israeli budget, Mapam had proposed in the Finance Committee that instead of the military budget being in two parts – 25 million Israeli pounds in the ordinary budget and 25 million in the secret military budget – there should be just 40 million Israeli pounds, all in the ordinary budget. Mikunis had asked Sneh (for the communists do not sit on the Finance Committee) why Mapam was proposing 40 million instead of 25 million Israeli pounds for the military budget, and Sneh had explained that Mapam was trying to get the military budget reduced from 50 to 40 million Israeli pounds and had made the matter quite clear. *Kol haam* had nevertheless published an article accusing Mapam of wanting to increase the military budget.

In conclusion, Sneh, as requested by Yaari, the chairman of the Peace Committee, explained to me the committee's position on the collection of signatures for the appeal for the conclusion of a peace treaty. Yaari and Bar-Yehuda felt that the campaign to collect signatures should be started after the elections to the Knesset, because (1) Mapam and the Communist Party did not have enough personnel to conduct two big campaigns at the same time, which

11. See *The Jerusalem Post,* 13 June 1951.

would harm both the collection of signatures and the electoral campaign; and (2) campaigning to collect signatures during the electoral campaign would inevitably lead people to connect the former with Mapam and the Communist Party and would reduce the number of people who would sign. Yaari had asked for clarification because the Communist Party had launched a campaign of pressure on Mapam to start collecting signatures at once. This evoked attacks from the right, which said that there was 'no peace in the Peace Committee'. This was undermining the prestige of the Peace Committee, and could well damage the results of the campaign for the collection of signatures for the appeal.

M.P. Popov, second secretary of the legation, was present during the conversation.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

366
A.I. Lavrent'ev to P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.26, P 33, D.178, L.125.
Moscow, 11 July 1951

On 10 July, Badi Hakki, the Syrian chargé d'affaires, called at the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, referring to instructions from the Syrian government, told us that the Syrian government had prepared a draft proposal for settling the Syrian–Israeli conflict. The premise of this draft, as Hakki informed us, is that the present frontier between Syria and Israel in the area of Lake Hula is artificial. The Syrian government proposes that this frontier be drawn in the centre of Lake Hula. If this proposal were accepted, Hakki went on, there could be an exchange of populations living on the edge of Lake Hula, especially since the Arabs who have remained on Israeli territory are persecuted by the Jews. Hakki told us that the proposal had recently been conveyed to the representatives of the USSR, the US, Britain and France in Damascus in order to elicit the views of these governments on the substance of the proposal. According to Hakki, the French government supports the proposal.

'Bearing in mind the friendly relations between Syria and the USSR', said Hakki, 'the Syrian government appeals to the Soviet government to support this proposal and to help implement it.'

Hakki also asked us to help the Syrian government to prevent Israel from building a dam and diverting the Banias and Hatsbani rivers from Lake Hula into the Sea of Galilee, in order to dry up Lake Hula.

Hakki was told that his statement would be brought to the notice of the authorities at the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Lavrent'ev

367
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

COPY: ISA 130.11/2492/16
Moscow, 12 July 1951
Highly Confidential

Here are some data from my personal experience during my first weeks here, which will help you understand the conditions in which we are living.

(1) A most unusual thing happened to me in the first days after my arrival. Quite by chance I met at an exhibition an old acquaintance, a friend from my youth, a relation of relations of mine in Israel. I hesitated a little, then went up to her. She was very glad to meet me. I conveyed to her regards from her relatives in Israel, and she started talking about herself. She said she had a grown-up son whom I would surely meet soon. I interrupted her, told her what my job here was, adding that she must decide whether it would be convenient for her to meet me. Her expression changed, she was silent for a minute, and then said: 'No, it would not be convenient.' We parted, and several minutes later she left the exhibition. This was my first lesson from my own personal experience.

(2) A fortnight ago our activity acquired special meaning. We felt that we had succeeded in contacting Jews by two different means. Arokh wrote you about the first one, and Argaman about the second. We also cabled you about the first one (our 700).[1] That conversation was most important. It was as if a searchlight had momentarily lit up some dark corners and we got an idea of how Jews were living in a city which had once been an important Jewish centre. The contact was interrupted, and we were left with the depressing feeling that people had been punished for their attempts to make contact with us. The second case seemed somewhat strange to us, for the woman in question was too interested in questions which we did not want to answer, and we all had the same feeling that there was a reason for her seeking out our people. Later, this feeling disappeared.

(3) While taking a walk through the streets, we all clearly saw our escorts, on foot and in cars. At a very late hour after that walk I was awakened by a loud conversation in the street. As you well know, he that keepeth the Israeli legation shall neither slumber nor sleep, and the conversation I heard was a telephone report by the guard from our walk concerning where we had been, what was going on in the legation, what we had done when we came back, and the satisfaction of the domestic staff with their job and with the minister and his wife. Somewhat later – another report, again loudly in the middle of the night, and, as the people of the legation explained to me the next day, this one concerned one of our local employees who should have come back from his leave and the reason for his being late.

1. Telegram not traced.

(4) My wife went to an exhibition. She did not introduce herself, and the lady in charge of the exhibition was very courteous and paid her a lot of attention, offered to guide her around, etc. Suddenly she was called to the telephone, where she spoke only a few scattered words, disappeared and did not return, in her hurry leaving the receiver on the table. When my wife left and was some distance away, a man passed her and, without stopping, spoke a word of warning, '*Slediat*' ('they are following [you]'), and continued on his way.

What would you call such things? Tidbits? Here they are our daily bread.

Yours,

S.E.

368
P.I. Ershov and M.P. Kalugin to A.A. Gromyko (Moscow)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.26, P.58, D.361, L.212
Tel Aviv, 13 July 1951

In our conversation on 1 June[1] Sharett told us that the question of handing over the property belonging to the USSR and the Palestine Society would be settled in the next two or three weeks. According to Sharett the delay in taking the decision was due to the absence of Ben-Gurion, who was in the US at that time.

Although six weeks have elapsed since this conversation with Sharett, the legation has had no answer to its notes of 6 June 1950 and 9 May 1951.[2] The Soviet property is effectively controlled by Rabinovich, who continues to keep in touch with Samarskii, the secretary of the former Direction of Hospices,[3] and bypassing Kalugin, pays him £500 a month for the support of female pilgrims and an office.[4]

This situation is due, evidently, to the Israeli government's efforts, under various pretexts, to try to hold up the transfer of the property. We believe that the Israeli government is delaying the answer to our notes about the property until the election campaign for the Knesset is over. We, therefore, think it advisable to send a note with the following wording to Prime Minister Ben-Gurion personally:

1. See Doc. 364.
2. For the note of 6 June 1950, see Doc. 346, n. 2. In the note of 9 May 1951 the Soviet legation announced Kalugin's arrival and requested speedy processing of the Soviet claim to properties of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, the former Russian Imperial Government and Grand Duke Sergei (see ISA 130.11/2501/18).
3. Following the Russian Revolution and until 1948, the property of the Orthodox Palestine Society administered by a body called the Direction of Hospices headed by Russian émigrés.
4. Approximately 110 stateless persons (monks, nuns and laymen) were living under the auspices of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and the Orthodox Palestine Society. In a letter to Moscow, dated 10 July 1950, Ershov recommended granting them Soviet citizenship (see AVP RF, f.059, op.24, p.52, d 332, l.217).

Mr. Prime Minister,

As you know, on the territory of the State of Israel, and on territory controlled by the Israeli government, there is a considerable amount of property in the form of buildings and plots of land which belong to the USSR and to the Russian Academy of Sciences' Palestine Society.

The legation of the USSR has repeatedly approached the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the appropriate transfer of all this property, to the legation of the USSR in Israel and to the representative of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Palestine Society, who arrived in Israel with proper authorization in April this year. However, in spite of a series of reminders addressed to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there has been no response to the legation's notes about Soviet property, The legation, in particular, has had no answer to its notes of 6 June 1950 and 9 May 1951.

The legation has also had no written confirmation of the appointment of the representative of the Moscow patriarch as head of the Ecclesiastical Mission, which should have been accompanied by a list of property previously handed over to the representative of the Moscow patriarch.

In his conversation with me on 1 June this year, Mr. Sharett, the minister of foreign affairs, said that the government committee created to deal with the transfer of the property had completed its work. It drew up proposals which needed to be confirmed by the government, and the delay in the settlement of this question was supposedly due to your absence from Israel. Mr. Sharett assured me that the issue of the transfer of property would be decided in two or, at the most, three weeks. However, six weeks have already passed since that conversation, and the legation has received no response to these questions.

This situation has evidently arisen because the relevant Israeli organs concerned are using various pretexts to hold up the transfer of Soviet property to its rightful owners.

I feel that such a long delay in the transfer of Soviet property is intolerable since it inflicts very great material loss on the rightful owners, and I would ask you, Mr. Prime Minister, to give the necessary instructions in the near future for the property referred to above to be appropriately transferred to the USSR legation in Israel and to the representative of the USSR Academy of Sciences' Russian Palestine Society.

With respect.

Please give due consideration.[5]

Ershov, Kalugin

5. For the reply, see Doc. 372.

369
A. Eban to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2410/2A
New York, 16 July 1951
Secret

MEETING: A. EBAN–IA. MALIK, THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SOVIET UNION AT THE UNITED NATIONS

On 4 July, accompanied by Mr. Gideon Rafael, counsellor to the Israeli delegation to the UN, I went to see Mr. Iakov Malik at the offices of the Soviet delegation to the UN. The talk, which was very cordial and instructive, opened with a discussion of Middle East affairs and then passed, at Mr. Malik's initiative and with his guidance, to the central problems of our world.

The very fact of this talk taking place aroused special interest in the public and in UN circles, as – ever since his fateful broadcast of 26 June[1] – Mr. Malik had evaded conversations on political affairs with his colleagues at the UN with great doggedness. Immediately following the broadcast, the president of the assembly and the representatives of the US and Britain approached him, demanding that he meet them to clarify its meaning. None of them managed to gain entry to his residence. They were parried with the pretext of his illness. Even Thomas Hamilton, the correspondent of the *New York Times* and doyen of the journalists at the UN, although he exerted his influence and pressure in this matter to the utmost, was turned down. On the last day of June Mr. Malik decided to recover from his illness in order to participate in the traditional monthly reception given by the president of the Security Council for his colleagues on the council. According to reports circulating in the corridors of the UN, Mr. Malik supplemented the Waldorf Astoria repast with sweetmeats and dainties, the produce of his country, 'and royal wine in abundance, according to the bounty of the king', but the conversation stuck to the usual rut of an exchange of courtesies without even once rising to matters of major importance. The following day Mr. Malik returned to his fortress and locked the door behind him.

The way our talk developed led me to think that he wanted to see me in order to get wind of the reverberations and impressions regarding the implications of his speech in the US and at the UN, without his having to add any clarification or comment on what he had declared. It is of course obvious that Entezam, Gross and Jebb, had they managed to make contact with him, would have had to find out what exactly he meant and to demand clarifications, and then he would have been faced with the unenviable alternative of either elaborating on what he had said – in direct contradiction to his orders from

1. Reference is apparently to a 15-minute recorded speech from New York in which Malik called for cease-fire talks in Korea leading to a mutual withdrawal of all forces from the 38th parallel.

above – or binding himself to complete silence, which would earn him respect among his colleagues. The situation is quite different in the case of the representative of a small country which does not shoulder any particular responsibility for the actions of the UN in Korea and who has not been required by his government to interrogate Mr. Malik to obtain further elucidations.

I began by congratulating Mr. Malik on his recovery. He replied politely, saying that I was also looking very well. I thanked him for the presents which he had been so kind as to send me through Mr. Lourie. He replied: 'This act illustrates two main principles of Soviet foreign policy – reciprocity and equality'. (You will recollect that, when he was ill the last time, we sent him a bottle of Israeli wine and a box of Elite chocolates.)

I informed Mr. Malik that we were resolved to raise the issue of the Suez Canal blockade at the Security Council.[2] After the UN representative on the spot had described the blockade as a hostile and aggressive act and demanded of Egypt that it stop this deleterious practice, it was clear that it was our right and duty to place this affair before the body entrusted with preserving international security. Seeing that the Soviet Union had called from the very beginning for establishing peaceful relations between Israel and the Arab states, I was certain that it would join in the effort to lift the embargo, as the cessation of hostilities is a prerequisite for any peaceful relations.

Mr. Malik nodded in agreement upon hearing the last sentence and put several questions concerning the damage caused to our economy as a result of the embargo. I explained the problem of the oil refineries and our wish to have commercial relations with Africa and the Far East, stressing, however, that our concern did not emanate solely from economic considerations. The central question was whether it was permissible or prohibited to carry out acts of hostility and aggression two-and-a-half years after signing a cease-fire agreement. Mr. Malik agreed with this comment, but added that we must remember Egypt's aspiration to consummate its independence. At this point we made clear to him the difference between our demand for lifting the embargo and Egypt's demand for the evacuation of foreign troops from its territory. Mr. Rafael reminded Mr. Malik that the State of Israel was very sensitive on this principle of evacuating foreign forces. I added that, even after the last of the British forces had left Egypt, an independent and free Egypt would continue to be bound by its international obligations which regulated its relations with other countries, namely, the UN Charter, the Suez Canal Treaty and the cease-fire agreement. These words apparently impressed him, and he did not challenge our argument throughout the rest of the talk.

---

2. See Doc. 345 and n. 2 there. On 10 July 1951 Israeli minister in Moscow Eliashiv visited the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs and reported to Deputy Director of the Near and Middle East Department Bazarov on the planned Israel's protest (AVP RF, f.059, op.26, p.33, d.178, l.127 and ISA 130.09/2326/6). On 11 July 1951 Levavi informed Ershov in Tel Aviv of the forthcoming Israeli appeal to the Security Council (AVP RF, f.059, op.26, p.58, d.361, l.208). On 12 July Gromyko telegraphed Tsarapkin in New York, Ershov in Tel Aviv and Semen Kozyrev in Cairo with the information transmitted by Eliashiv to Bazarov (AVP RF, f.059, op.26, p.33, d.178, l.127).

In light of this conversation we got the impression that the Soviet Union was liable to conduct itself regarding this controversy as in the Naharayim and Hula conflicts, that is, to maintain silence during the debate and abstain in the voting. The fact that the State of Israel would be raising this specific issue rather than Britain raising the general issue of British–Egyptian relations would safeguard us against the possibility of Soviet opposition. It should be noted that in previous situations, specifically during the August 1949 and November 1950 debates at the Security Council, the Soviet Union did not demonstrate any readiness to hasten to Egypt's aid although the Suez Canal blockade was harshly criticized.

Mr. Malik requested clarifications about the present situation in our conflict with Syria. He asked whether the Security Council's 18 May resolution[3] should not be construed as a change for the worse in Britain's attitude towards us. (The opinion prevails in some UN circles that it was Britain and not the US which initiated the debate at the Security Council following the cease-fire of 8 May.) Mr. Malik added that the 18 May resolution made the situation worse than it had been because the Arabs were encouraged in their extremist stand. This was the first negative remark regarding the conduct of the Western powers in the Hula issue which we had heard from a representative of the Soviet Union.

Upon concluding the discussion of Middle East issues, I avoided touching on the subject of Korea, but Mr. Malik turned towards me and asked: 'And what is happening here?' When he saw that I was nonplussed at the wide range and general character of the question, he became more specific: 'I mean the Korean War and the prospects of peace'. I said that there was a strong desire in Washington to end the hostilities in Korea, and that the American people had heaved a sigh of relief when the door to peace was opened so widely in the speech of the Soviet representative. Mr. Rafael reminded Mr. Malik that in all our talks with him we had absolutely rejected the assumption that the American people and their leaders sought to incite war. (In our previous conversation, which had been rather strained, Mr. Malik rejected our assumption, and argued that the wishes of the American people were of no importance as they were totally under the sway of their rulers' lust for domination.)

Mr. Malik said that his last speech had been very favourably received by the masses of the American people. He had received letters and telegrams from all over the country congratulating him on the Soviet initiative. A nun from Chicago had sent him an ornamented cross with heartfelt wishes for his success. A lady from New York had sent him a heart-shaped talisman, expressing her wishes for his recovery from his heart disease. 'Everybody is happy, except for General Marshall and Mr. [Charles Edward] Wilson', concluded Mr. Malik. Then he embarked on an emotional discourse on the yearning for peace

3. See Doc. 359, and n. 1 there.

and on the fear of 'the ruling circles' in the US that a cease-fire in Korea might result in the lowering of tension and thence to a decrease in military production. The American people long for peace, especially after suffering tens of thousands of losses in Korea, but the official policy is still based on the threat of war.

It was clear to us that Mr. Malik's speech was intended no less to influence the United States' armament policy than to bring about certain results in the Far East. In any case, in this conversation Mr. Malik evinced more interest in the American than in the Korean front.

The discussion then turned to examining the prospects for the future, and in particular that Mr. Malik's speech would serve as a turning-point not only in the direction of peace in Korea but also in restoring security the world over. Mr. Malik told us that at the Security Council reception the representatives of Britain and the US had touched on this point and pressed him about the 'closed world', saying that peace would not be possible between governments as long as there were no cultural relations between nations. Mr. Malik said he categorically rejected the notion that Eastern Europe comprised a closed world and a purdah culture. 'A certain well-known dancer from our country is touring France; a famous Russian violinist is performing in Rome, and the Moscow football team is playing in Norway.' (Mr. Malik did not say a word about reciprocal visits.) He had told Gross and Jebb that their criticism reflected only superficial aspects of the problem and did not touch on the crux of the matter. 'I told them, "Dismantle your aggressive bases in Europe and Asia and a wave of Russian dancers will sweep the entire world, if you so wish".' When Mr. Malik referred to the aggressive expansion of the US to Turkey and Greece, we strove hard to refute his argument. We explained that, after World War II, which had brought about the disintegration of mighty powers like Germany and Japan and the weakening of other powers, namely Britain and France, a power vacuum was formed into which flowed ripples of influence of the two giant powers, the United States and the Soviet Union. This process can not be considered as calculated aggression. Mr. Rafael added that this process was now being consolidated, and perhaps this consolidation would stabilize a peace equilibrium. As to the US, its instinctive inclination was towards disarmament and isolationism. Mr. Malik replied that the two world wars had put an end to the isolationist movement in America.

Mr. Rafael reminded Mr. Malik of his [Rafael's] remark a few weeks previously that the four–power talks had no chance of success as long as the war in Korea continued. Mr. Malik replied: 'You may be right, but the end of fighting in Korea will be the test of US sincerity in seeking a general settlement.' Further on Mr. Malik agreed with my remark that not a single member of the American Congress, even among those who had appeared supportive of MacArthur's extremist proposals, suggested rejecting Mr. Malik's proposal, because not a single politician in the country would dare to appear as demanding the continuation of the war. Mr. Malik said that he had noted this

interesting fact. Mr. Rafael said that the State of Israel had adhered to a consistent policy on the Korea issue; it had always supported a cease-fire as an essential precondition to the settlement of political problems. Mr. Malik made no response to this. Speaking about his broadcast in a personal vein, he pointed out that fate had often put him in the position of a peacemaker. When he was ambassador to Japan in 1945, he was the first to whom the Japanese transmitted their desire to surrender; it seems they were unable to locate General MacArthur and the act of surrender to the US came later. Afterwards it was Mr. Malik who succeeded in having the Berlin blockade lifted; and now a turnabout in the Korean conflict was occurring as a result of his speech. Mr. Rafael proposed that after these achievements Mr. Malik devote his efforts to making peace between Israel and the Arab states. Mr. Malik burst out laughing and said emphatically that his talent was not so far-reaching. Moreover, another angel of peace, Dr Bunche, had already made his name in this sphere and Mr. Malik had no intention of competing with others in the mediating profession.

When I asked what Mr. Malik's plans were for the coming summer, he said that he had completed his preparations for his trip and would be leaving in two days' time. He did not think the time was suitable for a political debate on the Korean and Far East problems. Such a debate would be worthless as long as the right of the People's [Republic of] China to participate in the work of the UN had not been recognized, and the prospects of this happening were not realistic in view of the intractable American stand. It was therefore preferable to deal for the moment only with the cessation of hostilities. When we got up to say goodbye, Mr. Malik said he hoped to meet us again not in New York but in Paris. This was an obvious hint that he did not wish to return to New York as permanent representative to the UN. His weak voice bore witness to his illness and so did his frequent cough. The parting undertones were also apparent in the special cordiality of the exchange of courtesies. Finally, Mr. Malik, out of line with his usual behaviour, accompanied us down the stairs as far as the front door, and virtually walked along Park Avenue with us in broad daylight.

When I told Mr. Malik of Shmuel Eliashiv's appointment as our minister in Moscow, he expressed his admiration for Eliashiv and said he was impressed by our minister's familiarity with Russian literature.

If Mr. Malik is indeed about to relinquish his post in New York, then we have come to the end of a very interesting period in Israeli-Soviet relations. During these three years he had always displayed consistent sympathy for our cause and unusual interest in the historical event of Israel's rebirth. Even the process of our drawing closer to the West and our support of a number of anti-Soviet resolutions in the assembly did not influence his attitude and he had never uttered a single word of criticism. Lately, since our admission to the UN, he has held wide-ranging and candid talks on world affairs with Mr. Rafael and myself. And when I refrained from seeking him out because I was too busy he

would find a suitable opportunity to let me know of his disappointment and his wish to renew contact. Inasmuch as these relations may seem to reflect this, there is no indication that we have lost our worth and stature in the eyes of the Soviet Union.

After he left for Moscow, I learned that this was the sole political conversation Mr. Malik held with anybody from the day of his broadcast on 26 June until his departure from the US.

Yours,

Abba Eban

370
Meeting: A.A. Gromyko – Sh. Eliashiv (Moscow, 17 July 1951)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.4, P.9, D.5, L.5
Secret

At 14.00 today I saw Eliashiv, who came to pay a protocol visit.

In our conversation Eliashiv mentioned Israel's appeal to the Security Council about the obstacles placed by Egypt to the passage of ships through the Suez Canal with goods for Israel, and he asked for support for the Israeli position in this matter.[1]

I replied that our attitude to this question would be elaborated by the Soviet representative on the Security Council. Eliashiv said that the Israeli complaint would probably be dealt with in the Security Council on 26 July.

When I asked how the Americans and British were conducting themselves in this Israeli–Egyptian conflict, Eliashiv said that the Americans were not directly inconvenienced by the obstacles raised by Egypt because not many American ships with cargoes for Israel passed through the Suez Canal. As for Britain, according to Eliashiv, it did 'feel the obstacles', because some of its ships were being held up by the Egyptians. But the countries which suffered most were the Scandinavians and the Union of South Africa.

Eliashiv raised the question of obtaining permission for Soviet citizens with close relatives in Israel to emigrate there. He said that a positive decision on this question would 'evoke a wave of sympathy for you in Israel'.

I replied that this was a complex matter, and before giving an answer, I would have to make the necessary inquiries and look into the question carefully. I added that we were dealing with a very serious matter – that is, Soviet citizens leaving the country, and our position on this question had to be made known to the minister.

---

1. See Doc. 345 and n. 2 there, Doc. 371 and Doc. 377 and n. 1 there.

Eliashiv also raised the question of permission for the mother of Namir, former Israeli minister to the USSR, to immigrate to Israel. He said that Namir had already approached the legation of the USSR in Israel with a written request.

I answered that I would find out where this matter stood.[2]

At the end of the conversation Eliashiv said that he saw his task as helping to establish more friendly relations between the USSR and Israel.

I said that such a statement could only be welcomed since there was no reason for relations between our countries to be other than normal.

The rest of the conversation concerned protocol.

The conversation lasted 15 minutes.

Comrade Poliakov, the secretary in the Near and Middle East Department, was present at the conversation.[3]

USSR Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
A. Gromyko

371
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/6
Moscow, 17 July 1951

I visited Gromyko. The conversation differed from my previous talks at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its liveliness and in Gromyko's questions and comments. Note their position as reflected in his words.[1]

(a) Suez. I held forth on our stand. His comments: from the point of view of international law, the Egyptians have a point regarding the state of belligerency with Israel, although it is difficult to tolerate acts of war committed by customs officials. His comments echoed my talk with Bazarov.[2] He asked about the position of Britain and the US, I replied that Britain would support [us] and I was not certain about the US, which was less affected.

Doc. 370

2. Namir did not receive a response to his written request of 15 May 1951. His mother died in Kherson in August 1952 (see Namir, *Shlihut beMoskva*, p. 229).
3. For the Israeli version of this meeting see Doc 371.
   The following handwritten notes were appended to this document: 'To Comrade V. Poliakov. Check whether the file of Namir's mother was dealt with by the [Near and Middle East] Department, and if not, contact Comrade Gromyko's office and forward it to the Consular Department, 19.7.1951.' 'Comrade Solod, Please follow up. A. Bogomolov.' The document was sent to Stalin, Molotov, Malenkov, Beria, Mikoian, Kaganovich, Bulganin and Khrushchev.

Doc. 371

1. See also Doc. 370.
2. See Doc. 369 and n. 2 there and Eliashiv to Eytan, 10 July 1951, ISA 130.09/2325/6.

(b) Immigration of relatives. I said that permits for the unification of divided families would be deeply appreciated in our country. He asked about the numbers [involved], I said not a few. He said that as this concerned Soviet citizens, it was a very complicated affair which could not be discussed sweepingly, that he could not give me an answer without being acquainted with the material, and that the appropriate department would have to deal with it. I mentioned cases where they had given an affirmative answer, which showed that they had no objection in principle, and requested that they make inquiries and answer us speedily and systematically. In reply to my question, he said he was ready to see me whenever I wished.

(c) He promised to find out about a permit for Namir's mother. Please inform Namir.

When I said in conclusion that I saw my task as explaining our concerns to them and their concerns to my government in order to enhance good relations between us, he wished me success and said there was no reason why relations between us should not be normal. The entire conversation was marked by attention and cordiality on his part. He mentioned his acquaintance with Ben-Gurion, Sharett and Eban. I suggest you publish the fact of this conversation without mentioning its content.

Eliashiv

372
A.I. Lavrent'ev to P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F 089, OP.5, P.14, D.36, LL.9–14
Moscow, 19 July 1951

What must be done[1] is for you to see Foreign Minister Sharett, refer to your previous conversations with him, and once again raise the question of speeding up the transfer of the property to the legation of the USSR and the representative of the Russian Palestine Society and also formalize the transfer of the Ecclesiastical Mission's property to the representative of the Moscow patriarchate.

1. This document is a reply to a proposal made by Ershov and Kalugin on 13 July 1951 to send a telegram to Ben-Gurion regarding Russian property in Palestine (see Doc. 368). The first paragraph was crossed out in the original handwritten Russian text. It read as follows:
   Your proposal to send a personal note to Prime Minister Ben-Gurion is not appropriate. It is quite plain that the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs is delaying its answer to our notes about the transfer of the property with the knowledge of the government of Israel and of Ben-Gurion personally.

373
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett (Tel Aviv, 23 July 1951)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.26, P.58, D.361, L.220

On 23 July, following your instructions,[1] I went to see Sharett and raised the question of speeding up the transfer of Soviet property to us. Referring to earlier conversations, I remarked that since Sharett's promises had not yet been carried out, the impression was created of deliberate retention of the property. I asked when the property would finally be transferred. Sharett answered that the delay in the Israeli government's decision could be explained by several reasons, particularly by the vast amount of urgent business which had accumulated while Prime Minister Ben-Gurion had been in the US, and by the ministers' preoccupation with the election campaign.[2] On the other hand, the present government could not take such a serious step as the decision about the Russian property, since it would give certain political parties an additional weapon for use in the election campaign. I said that the transfer of property had nothing to do with the election campaign, and therefore I could not recognize Sharett's explanation as valid. Sharett said that formally this might be so, but, in reality, a positive decision by the government would be criticized by the right-wing parties, and a negative decision by the left. Moreover, just now, on the eve of the elections, the government lacked what might be termed a moral mandate to take such important decisions. After the elections, when a stable government was in power, it would not hesitate to resolve the question of the Russian property.

In conclusion Sharett gave a brief account of Eliashiv's conversation with Comrade Gromyko,[3] noting that the minister had raised two questions:

1) Permission for relatives of Israeli citizens to leave the USSR for Israel; and

2) Passage through the Suez Canal of ships bound for Israel (in connection with Israel's complaint to the Security Council).

My conversation with Sharett indicates that the Israeli government intends to compromise or even take a negative decision regarding the Soviet property. For this reason, it has postponed taking the decision until after the elections, which will result in the formation of a 'stable government'. It is characteristic that, as in our conversation of 1 June, Sharett did not use the words 'transfer of property', although for our part that was precisely what we were discussing.

It is conceivable that the Israelis will make the transfer of property conditional upon the emigration of relatives of Israeli citizens from the USSR. This tendency emerged when Sharett, in answer to my statement, quickly pointed out that Eliashiv had raised the matter of the emigration of relatives when he saw Comrade Gromyko a few days ago. Bearing in mind Sharett's response as

1. See Doc. 372.
2. The elections to the second Knesset took place on 30 July.
3. See Docs. 370, 371.

above, we proposed approaching Ben-Gurion directly on this question. In our view, further discussion with Sharett about the transfer of property would be useless, and we must approach the prime minister, and then the president. This will show the Israelis that we attach a great deal of importance to the property issue.

Ershov

374
Memorandum by A. Levavi

COPY: ISA 130.02/2403/16
[Moscow] 27 July 1951

The following are the fundamental principles of Soviet policy in the Middle East:

(1) The imperialists are working to extend and consolidate their rule over the region in order to turn it into an area of deployment against the Soviet Union.

(2) The Americans are crowding out the British.

(3) The imperialists do not wish war to break out between the countries of the region, but a certain amount of tension between these countries could aid them in consolidating their domination.

(4) For now, the Soviet Union is not interested in actual war in the Middle East (between Israel and the Arabs), fearing that such a war could bring about forceful intervention by the West and consolidate its hegemony. On the other hand, the Soviet Union is not interested today in a peace settlement in the Middle East and it fiercely denounces the Tripartite Declaration and the West's plans for regional treaties in the Middle East. Should peace come about today, it would be considered [by the Soviet Union] as an 'American–British peace'.

(5) The solution of the 'dialectic' between paragraphs (3) and (4): The imperialists are interested in the causes of the tension in order to be the 'mediating' power which can overcome these causes while ensuring their own interests. The Soviet Union is interested in the causes which the imperialist 'mediators' would be unable to surmount, and which would constitute sources of permanent tension that would gradually bring about the consolidation of revolutionary forces.

(6) Therefore the Soviet Union will now view with disapproval efforts to achieve peace between Israel and the Arabs, though it will not act overtly against these efforts; it will, however, rally its friends to act against the pro-Western side in any possible settlement.

(7) The Soviet bloc will support any action in the Middle East aimed at weakening Western influence: nationalization of the oil companies, evacuation of British forces, rejection of loans offered (Point Four in Syria)[1] etc.

(8) The social problems of the region have been left unsolved. Therefore, a wide field is open to communist activity and there is always the latent possibility of a social upheaval in favourable military circumstances. The Soviet Union conceives of the Arab states as semi-colonial and semi-feudal. Israel, on the other hand, is a relatively more stable bourgeois state, but its strength can be sapped by its economic problems.

(9) The forces directed by the Soviet Union will always be more extremist in their struggle for 'national independence' than other popular forces in the Middle East (Mosaddeq, in Persia, may come to terms with the United States and perhaps also with Britain; the Tudeh Party will support nationalization, but after Mosaddeq and his people reach the limit of their anti-imperialist extremism, the Tudeh will accuse them of treason, because the Tudeh hold another card – the Soviet Union).[2]

(10) The claims of the communist peace movement, the slogan of neutrality towards global blocs, the campaign against concessions or imperialist bases etc., all these are effective tools in the Soviet struggle against Western consolidation in the Middle East.

(11) The Soviet Union knows that Israel is a fermenting factor in the Middle East, both socially and nationally. The Soviet Union also has hopes of the Arabs of Israel organizing into a communist movement which would exert its influence beyond the borders of Israel as well.

(12) It follows that the Soviet Union is interested in Israel's existence. In spite of Soviet propaganda accusing Israel of being a satellite of the United States, the Soviet Union welcomes demonstrations of independent political initiatives on Israel's part, and there are good prospects for an Israeli information campaign stressing that the extent of independent Israeli initiative is a function of the increase in its demographic and economic strength. It is true that these are all matters of secondary importance and that Israel can not expect any significant and consistent support by the Soviet Union on any currently foreseeable issue. This consideration, however, must not be entirely ignored when it comes to the problem of emigration from Eastern Europe.

(13) The Soviet Union will employ tactics which will gain it sympathy in certain circles in Israel and also in the Arab states. These tactics will sometimes consist of silent neutrality (as in the case of the Arab refugee problem or the

---

1. In 1951, the US attempted to conclude an aid agreement with Syria within the framework of the Four Point program (see Doc. 376, n. 2). These attempts failed owing to the rapid turnover of governments in Syria, the deep sense of economic nationalism and the general suspicion of the US because of its relations with Israel (see *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. V, pp. 1076–8).
2. On 29 April 1951, the Iranian parliament nominated leader of the National Front Mohammad Mosaddeq as prime minister. Within a short time he nationalized the oil industry, with the support of the Tudeh Communist Party.

Jerusalem issue at the last United Nations Assembly or the Hula problem at the Security Council). But on other occasions the Soviet Union will support this or that party, perhaps even most vigorously. One must be wary of sudden changes in the Soviet position on Middle East affairs!

(14) Should a world war break out, the Middle East would presumably be a primary target for a Soviet invasion. In addition to general strategic considerations, a significant role will be played, in my opinion, by the Soviet assessment of the social situation in the region.

(15) As long as the Cold War goes on, the Soviet Union will exercise considerable restraint in the Middle East along the lines described above.

A. Levavi

375
Excerpt from the Political Report of the USSR Legation in Israel

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.4, P.9, D.9, LL.201–2
Tel Aviv, 13 August 1951

[...][1]

The government of Israel continues to pursue a hostile policy towards the Soviet Union. There is more and more anti-Soviet propaganda, focusing mainly on the status of Jews in the Soviet Union. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Israeli legation in Moscow are among the main purveyors of anti-Soviet fabrications for the press: a number of papers have acquired so-called special correspondents, which is simply a cover name for employees of the ministry and the legation. The Israeli government does not limit itself to anti-Soviet propaganda but has begun, so far semi-officially, to raise the question of the immigration of Jews from the USSR to Israel. Eliashiv, the new Israeli minister in the USSR, has been given the task, as he once put it, of 'breaking the ice of silence' about immigration. Simultaneously, the activity of Zionist groups in Israel, which are connected to a greater or lesser extent with Jewish immigrants from the USSR, is increasing. For instance, the society of Zionist Socialists[2] has decided to put the immigration of Jews from the USSR to Israel on the agenda of the 23rd Zionist Congress, which opens on 14 August in Jerusalem. The arrival in Israel of a woman, described as 'the first female immigrant from Russia', was given wide publicity in the Israeli press in June.[3]

1. Comprises the concluding two pages of a 29-page report. For the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs' critical reaction to this report, see Doc. 386.
2. Reference is probably to the Mapai Party organization in the Diaspora.
3. Apparently this refers to 68-year-old Sofia Garfunkel, who was reunited with her two daughters in Israel (see Namir, *Shlihut beMoskva*, p. 300).

In addition, the government of Israel continues to hold up the transfer of Soviet property, pleading various 'technical reasons'. Although the representatives of the Russian Palestine Society have arrived in Israel, its property has still not been handed over.

This anti-Soviet line in foreign policy also affects Israel's attitude to the People's Democracies. In the second quarter of this year, the Israelis raised the question of Jewish immigration from Hungary and of the release of a number of Zionist leaders who were supposedly arrested in Romania.[4] It is only the continued immigration from Romania which somewhat restrains Israel from taking openly hostile measures against the People's Democracies. It is known that at a session of the [Knesset] Committee on Foreign [and Security] Affairs in April, a proposal was made to organize a number of demonstrations demanding the release of Zionist leaders in Romania, but Sharett prevented this by saying that these actions would hinder continued immigration from Romania or might even lead to its complete cessation.

Such, in general terms, is the picture of the Israeli government's foreign policy in the second quarter of 1951.

* * *

In this situation we should, first, do more to unmask Anglo-American intrigues in Israel and the undemocratic domestic and pro-American foreign policy of the Israeli élite. The USSR legation has often made this suggestion, but our press continues to publish its comments only on an occasional basis. We believe that if the Soviet press paid more active attention to Israel, this would help to weaken the effect of the Zionist propaganda campaign for the immigration of Jews to Israel, including Jews from the Soviet Union. Second, we should take a firmer line in defence of our property interests. Seeing that the Israeli authorities continue to put off the transfer of property, pleading various 'technical reasons', it would be more advantageous to raise the question of the transfer of property directly with the prime minister and then with the president. Third, we must do everything possible to step up the sort of activities pursued by VOKS and to increase the funds allocated to it.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

4. See Doc. 363.

376
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.26, P.58, D.361, LL.262–6
Tel Aviv, 25 August 1951

Although more than three weeks have passed since the Israeli parliamentary elections, a new government has not yet been formed. The president entrusted the formation of a government to Ben-Gurion, the leader of Mapai, but things are moving very slowly. Ben-Gurion is negotiating with four parties: Mapam, the General Zionists, the Progressive Party and Hapoel Hamizrahi. The latter three parties are trying to gain some concessions on government economic and domestic policy, but most of the discussion is about the distribution of portfolios.

Ben-Gurion's dealings with representatives of Mapam on questions of foreign policy deserve particular attention. The Mapam representatives demanded that Ben-Gurion work out with them a coordinated government program, which would include points from the Mapam platform adopted at their convention in Haifa from 30 May–4 June, namely: ensuring genuine neutrality for Israel, no bases for foreign states, no conclusion of treaties or agreements undermining the state's independence, rejection of loans or any other financial assistance with enslaving conditions, support for the peace movement and the conclusion of a peace treaty between the five Great Powers. (The materials from this conference were sent to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs by diplomatic pouch on 1 August.)

Dr. Sneh told me that in response to this demand, Ben-Gurion made the following statement to the Mapam representatives:

1) He is against the policy of neutrality and prefers an ad hoc solution to each individual question in foreign policy, according to the circumstances. He is against Mapam's demand for neutrality because it would, in effect, align Israel with the USSR against the US.

2) He can not accept Mapam's demand for the non-fulfilment of one-sided resolutions of the UN; he holds that UN decisions are binding on all states which are members of the UN.

Asked whether, if the war in Korea continued, the government would again send penicillin and orange juice to American troops, Ben-Gurion answered that one should not ask hypothetical questions. In reply to the question whether it was true that the prime minister was the only member of the government to insist on the dispatch of a military medical unit (nurses and doctors) to Korea, Ben-Gurion said that he was not obliged to answer such questions.[1]

1. In 1950, the Israeli government resolved to send medicines and orange juice concentrates to the UN forces in Korea following an official request by the UN secretary-general. Ben-Gurion, who favoured the dispatch of a combat unit to Korea, even of nominal strength, was overruled by the majority of the government (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 5, *Companion Volume*, pp. 172–3).

3) Ben-Gurion said that he could not support the peace movement, or the campaign for a nuclear ban, because he considered the movement nothing but communist propaganda. The Russians do not have many atomic bombs and are therefore aiming for a ban on atomic weapons, but not, for example, on artillery, of which they have a considerable amount.

4) He is against any occupation of Israel but must distinguish between an American and a Soviet occupation; the former would not affect the regime or immigration or Zionism, whereas the latter would put the Israel Communist Party into power, which would mean an end to immigration and Zionism. He is ready to make an alliance even with the devil to prevent a Soviet occupation of Israel, but he would also struggle against an American occupation if it was undertaken without Israel's consent.

5) He can not accept Mapam's demand not to take financial assistance from the US, even if this was given according to the terms of the Marshall Plan or according to Point Four of Truman's program.[2] This did not mean that Israeli policy was subordinate to the US since such agreements did not involve any political or military obligations to the US.

After answering questions, Ben-Gurion said that he was firmly convinced that Israel's foreign policy must be based on lasting friendship with the US and Britain but without Israel accepting any obligations directed against other countries. He was ready to establish friendly relations with the USSR, but this was not possible in practice because the USSR gave Israel no financial assistance (it had refused to give a loan), and did not allow the immigration of Jews from the USSR to Israel. Ben-Gurion said that some people in the US State Department thought of Israel as a potential opponent of the US, but he was please to note that the US government did not share this view. Ben-Gurion went on:

> We must be careful to see that Mapam's participation in government does not lead certain people in the State Department, and Truman, personally to concur with this view. I don't want Moscow to see Israel as a potential adversary either, but I dread thinking that Israel could turn into an enemy of the USSR, because if the USSR gains a victory in Israel, we shall all become *pomeshchiki*.[3]

Ben-Gurion added that he would not let the Americans have bases in exchange for money, but in the event of Soviet aggression, this question would have to be reconsidered. The participation of Mapam in the government was a guarantee that Israel would not allow bases of foreign states on Israeli territory. He agreed that Israel should not join the Atlantic bloc, but when he was asked whether the conclusion of peace with the Arab states was

2. On 20 January 1949, in his inauguration speech on assuming the presidency, Truman proposed a four-point program to improve the international situation. Point four of that program called for continuous American economic, technical and scientific aid to foreign countries. Israel applied and benefited from this assistance.

3. A Russian word meaning 'landowning gentry'. Ben-Gurion was alluding to the destruction of this social class in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution.

conditional on Israel's participation in a Middle East pact, he answered that this was a hypothetical question. In conclusion Ben-Gurion stated that Israel's foreign policy should remain unchanged.

In its negotiations with Ben-Gurion, Mapam has so far kept to the program adopted in Haifa, but the Ahdut Haavoda group includes quite a number of members who favour joining the government unconditionally. Mapam's political committee decided [however] that the Haifa program was a basis for Mapam to join the government. Negotiations on questions of domestic policy begin next week.

The Mapam leader, Yaari, told me that the negotiations with Ben-Gurion were being conducted in order to unmask both the foreign and the domestic program of Mapai. However, Ben-Gurion, having begun the negotiations on forming a government first with Mapam, aims to show the Israeli public that he stands for the formation of a government of the workers' parties, Mapai and Mapam. If negotiations with Mapam come to nothing, then he will most probably make a public statement that in spite of all his efforts to bring Mapam into the government, it refused to join, and that, given the way the situation has developed, he, Ben-Gurion, has been forced to form a bloc with the General Zionists. Ben Gurion has admitted that it was a mistake to call the elections.

Negotiations on forming the government are continuing.

Ershov

377
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett (Tel Aviv, 31 August 1951)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.4, P 9, D.7, L.99

I called on Sharett at his invitation. He said that the government of Israel had been extremely surprised by Tsarapkin's speech in the Security Council about the Suez Canal.[1] After the conversation of Eliashiv, the Israeli minister in Moscow, with representatives of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, and with Gromyko in particular, he had formed the impression that even if the Soviet Union did not support the Israeli point of view, it would at least abstain from voting. But now, when the majority opinion in the Security Council had taken shape wholly in favour of Israel, and voting was about to take place, the Soviet representative had demanded that the vote be put off until Saturday.[2] Moreover, in the section of his speech which argued his case, Tsarapkin showed a

1. On 11 July 1951 Israel lodged a complaint to the Security Council concerning restrictions imposed by Egypt on the passage of ships and cargo through the Suez Canal to and from Israel. The Security Council discussed this matter in several meetings beginning on 26 July – the three Western powers proposing that Egypt lift all restrictions on shipping. On 29 August the Soviet representative spoke for the first time and proposed that voting be postponed to 1 September.
2. To wit, for two days, until 1 September 1951.

tendency to favour the position of Egypt, and this in addition to the fact that the proposal to postpone the vote had already given Egypt moral support which it did not deserve.[3] As is known, the Egyptian government, by blockading the Suez Canal and barring the passage of ships bound for Israel, was violating the cease-fire agreement with Israel and undermining the cause of peace throughout the Middle East. Sharett observed that in 1947 the concerted voting of the representatives of the US and the USSR in the UN General Assembly and the acceptance of the resolution on the formation of a Jewish state had played a decisive role in the creation of the State of Israel. At present – a tense moment for the cause of peace in the whole world – a similar concerted vote by the representatives of the USSR and the US in the Security Council could significantly increase the Security Council's authority and would create the impression in world public opinion that Soviet–American relations, on which the cause of peace depended, were beginning to improve. In conclusion Sharett stated: 'For us it would be most desirable that the representative of the USSR join others in support of the four-power draft resolution on navigation through the Suez Canal, or at least that it not obstruct passage of the resolution.'[4]

Sharett asked me to convey this request to the Soviet government. I answered that his statement would be passed on.

The conversation lasted 12 minutes.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

---

3. The Security Council record quotes Tsarapkin as follows:
   > In the second place, the Egyptian representative spoke today, for example, of the possibilities of settling the question. He said: Let us meet and discuss the matter. He said that an attempt was being made to impose an ultimatum, that the desire was not to discuss the question but to dictate terms. Some have already remarked that sufficient study has not yet been devoted to the question and that all the ways and means of settling it have not yet been found or investigated, and so on and so forth. In any case, the joint draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom, France and the United States is not the only correct solution of the problem. Other ways may be found (*SC OR*, 29 Aug. 1951, p. 8).
4. In the final voting, the joint Western resolution, calling upon Egypt to terminate all restrictions on passage thorough the Canal was accepted, The Soviet Union (together with India and China) abstained. For the Security Council resolution, see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 6, Editorial Note, pp. 593–4.

378
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – Sh. Eliashiv (Tel Aviv)[1]

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.4, P.9, D.7, LL.89–91
Tel Aviv, 3 September 1951

Eliashiv came to share his impressions of his first two months in Moscow[2] – the weather, the theatres etc. – and said that he had come to Israel because he was a member of the Supreme Zionist Court, which was responsible for checking the validity of the elections to the Zionist Congress and the credentials of its delegates.[3] I said that the local press coverage had included other reports with regards to his arrival. He said that he had heard about these, but had paid no attention to them. There were a good many Israeli newspapers that he did not read, including even his own party paper *Hador*. I expressed surprise, and said that I could not understand how, as an active member of Mapai, he did not read its newspaper. Eliashiv answered that the Israeli papers, including *Hador*, were quite irresponsible and their reports unreliable. The Moscow papers were something different. When you read them, you felt that every word was carefully considered and was not used without good reason. Recently, Eliashiv went on, Israel had become very popular in the Moscow press, which had printed a number of comments on it. I interrupted him to say that if we were talking about popularity, we were much more popular in the Israeli press than they were in the Moscow press. I knew this because I was privileged to read every day in a number of newspapers, including his party paper *Hador*, articles against the Soviet Union. Eliashiv said that one should not pay any particular attention to [these] articles, but I asked how one could not pay attention to them, for the papers were printed and consequently read by the population, which would therefore gain a distorted picture of Soviet government policy and of life in the Soviet Union.

Eliashiv went on to say that he had one practical question to ask me. At one time the legation[4] used to authenticate the signature of the director of the Consular Division of the Israeli Foreign Ministry on permits issued by the Ministry of Immigration for the entry into Israel of citizens of the Soviet Union who wanted to come to Israel; but later the legation had refused to certify the signature on these permits. They were, therefore, sent to him in Moscow and he sent them on to the Consular Department of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Not long ago, the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs had returned a whole bundle of these permits to the Israeli legation, together with a note to the effect that there was no need for them to be endorsed. This had led to a difficult situation since the USSR's domestic authorities, in considering the departure of any citizen of the USSR who was Jewish by nationality, required

1. The date of the meeting is not indicated. Presumably it took place in mid-August 1951.
2. Eliashiv arrived in Moscow as Israeli minister to the USSR on 11 June 1951.
3. The Zionist Congress opened on 14 August 1951.
4. Reference is to the Soviet legation in Israel.

two documents: 1) a permit for entry to Israel; and 2) the agreement of the relatives of the person wishing to go to Israel to give him board and lodging. Since neither the legation of the USSR in Israel nor the Consular Department of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs were endorsing [entry] permits,[5] he realized that applications for exit permits would not be accepted. He was therefore asking for the restoration of the procedure followed by many other legations and enshrined in international law, by which a document with the signature of the official representative of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be certified by the legation of the USSR. I answered that previously our Consular Division had indeed endorsed some of these documents, but that later, when their number greatly increased, the matter had been discussed in the department, which had decided that the procedure was incorrect. This was because the Soviet authorities which issued the exit permits to leave the USSR probably did not need to have the entry permits to another country submitted to them, since these took the form of the visa, issued in this case by the Israeli legation in Moscow. The Consular Department had, therefore, come to the conclusion that this permit was needed primarily by the Israeli legation and not by our corresponding departments. (A letter about this matter was sent to the Consular Department of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, pointing out that the Israelis were trying to use the fact that our departments were requiring permits to enter Israel as a loophole for immigration.)

Eliashiv then said that when he had seen Comrade Gromyko,[6] he had raised the question of permission for Israeli citizens' relatives living in the USSR to leave the country and indicated that he thought that the number would be not more than two or three thousand. Comrade Gromyko, it seems, answered that to resolve this issue he would need specific data. Having arrived here in Israel for the session of the Supreme Zionist Court, Eliashiv was partially dealing with this question too. He asked my opinion whether such a group of relatives could leave, but I answered that, since he had discussed this with the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, my opinion was irrelevant.

I asked whether he had found anything new on his arrival in Israel. He said that, not counting the heat wave, there were the parliamentary elections, the elections to the 23rd Zionist Congress, the work of the congress itself, and the negotiations for the formation of a government. He described the elections to the Knesset as having brought about no substantial changes and [he said] that the domestic situation in Israel was the same as before. The question of forming a government was very difficult. In all likelihood, a 'small coalition' would be formed consisting of Mapai, the Progressive Party and the two religious workers' parties, although discussions with Mapam were continuing as well.[7] Eliashiv said that the present electoral law ought to be substantially amended. The law must be based on majority rule, i.e., as in other countries,

5. The Russian original mistakenly used the term *vyezd* (exit) instead of *v"ezd.* (entry).
6. See Doc. 371.
7. See Doc. 379.

including the Soviet Union, with each constituency electing one deputy. This would bring the deputy closer to the electors, would enable the electors to keep tabs on the deputy's work, and if the work was unsatisfactory, would raise the question of recalling the deputy.

In conclusion Eliashiv said he was leaving for Moscow via Stockholm and Helsinki on Friday, 24 August.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

379
Meeting: P.I Ershov – M. Sneh (Tel Aviv, 3 September 1951)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.4, P.9, D.7, LL.100–3
Secret

Sneh told me that during the negotiations with representatives of Mapam over joining the government coalition, the government's economic and domestic policies were discussed. The Mapai delegation was led by Kaplan, the minister of finance. The representatives of Mapam asked questions or made proposals, and Kaplan and other Mapai delegates, including Namir, the former minister of Israel in the USSR, answered these questions.

1) The Mapam representatives asked whether the government intended to nationalize foreign concessions, and what intentions it had regarding the exploration and exploitation of oil in the Negev.

The Mapai delegation stated that it opposed the nationalization of the Haifa oil refineries and the potash and electric companies because it considered it necessary to promote the work of the oil refineries as much as possible. With regard to the other two companies, it was necessary to acquire 51 per cent of their shares in 1951–52. With regard to new concessions, the delegation indicated that American specialists Boll,[1] who had studied the oil issue in Israel, were preparing a draft law for the Knesset on a concession for exploration and exploitation of oil. However, the government considered it more advisable to grant this concession not to one but to a number of companies, although obviously it would be impossible to acquire a controlling per centage, i.e., 51 per cent, of the shares.

2) The Mapam representatives spoke in favour of a single state plan to be adopted by the government and to be binding on all enterprises, whether cooperative or private. The Mapai delegation answered that it would serve no purpose to adopt such a plan because it could scare away private entrepreneurs and reduce their interest in investing capital. The delegation said that

1. Reference is to Washington, DC based oil and gas consultants Max and Douglas Ball, who produced a report for the government entitled, 'Oil Prospects of Israel'. It was originally presented at the AAPG convention in St. Louis on 26 April 1951 and later published in the *AAPG Bulletin* (1 Jan. 1953), pp. 1–114.

it had no objection to the adoption of a general plan, but it should not be binding on enterprises.

3) The Mapam representatives proposed making all local capitalists invest at least 20 per cent of their capital in the expansion of production. The Mapai delegates refused to accept this on the grounds that capital investment must be voluntary, not dictated.

4) The representatives of Mapam also proposed launching a compulsory domestic loan, in which all people of means would have to buy bonds. The Mapai delegation rejected this proposal, arguing again that the distribution of bonds had to be a voluntary activity.

5) The Mapam representatives said that in order to safeguard the Israeli pound, it would be advisable to confiscate all the gold which was in private hands and concentrate it in the hands of the state. The Mapai delegates said that this would affect the interests of a large part of the population and cause discontent. They took the view that all gold should be registered.

6) The Mapam representatives proposed imposing a progressive income tax. The Mapai delegation answered that this deserved consideration but it could not be implemented just now.

These were the main issues in the negotiations between Mapai and Mapam on economic policy.

On government domestic policy the negotiations revolved around the following questions:

1) The Mapam representatives demanded the adoption of a state constitution. The Mapai delegation replied that it was too soon for this, and Ben-Gurion, who was present at the final meeting, stated that there was simply no need for a constitution since all the state's laws were equal and binding on its citizens.

2) The Mapam representatives proposed the adoption of a law on democratic liberties which would be an unshakable law of the state and which could be amended only if two-thirds of the Knesset deputies voted for the amendment. The Mapai delegation objected to such a law, arguing that since democratic liberties existed in Israel, there was no need to pass a law about them.

3) The Mapam representatives made the point that it would be advisable to return land to those Arabs who had come back to Israel or to compensate them for its value. The Mapai delegation agreed with this in principle but said that it would be impossible to implement.

4) The Mapam representatives raised the question of abolishing the system of military districts in any area with an Arab population.[2] The Mapai delegation rejected this proposal, arguing that it would be premature, but that they would agree to certain measures to ease the position of the Arabs (this meant issuing

2. The Russian text uses the term *voennye okruga* (miltary districts). Reference is evidently to the military government which operated within the framework of the Defence Ministry. Its apparatus controlled and imposed restrictions on Israeli Arabs, serving in many cases as an intermediary between the Arab population and government authorities.

permits for travel within Israel which would be valid for a longer period than the present ones).

5) The Mapam representatives stated that it was necessary to establish equal wages for Arab and Jewish workers since unequal wages discriminated against the Arabs. The Mapai delegation rejected this proposal, together with another, that Arabs should be able to register at the same labour exchanges as Jews.

In this way, Mapam's basic proposals on economic and domestic policy were rejected by the Mapai delegation. Partial concessions to which the Mapai delegation agreed concerned matters of secondary or lesser importance.

However, the Ahdut Haavoda group in Mapam still insists on joining the government. This has provoked a major debate in Mapam. Sneh thinks that Ben-Gurion may succeed in achieving a split in Mapam (by the departure of Ahdut Haavoda from the party); then he could promise to give the Mapam representatives in the government the right to oppose it on those matters on which the decisions taken at the Haifa Convention[3] make it impossible for them to support it.

At the end Sneh told me that he would be going to Switzerland in a few days' time to take part in the World Jewish Congress. The Congress was to discuss participation in the so-called Peace Congress, which Tito's government is convening in Belgrade.[4] He had accepted the party leadership's proposal to take part in the Jewish Congress, in order to ensure a rejection of the Titoists' invitation to the 'peace congress' in Belgrade.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

3. See Doc. 376.
4. This conference, convened by the Yugoslavs in Zagreb in 1951, brought together various movements and groups from Europe and Asia to discuss the idea of coexistence and, specifically, ways of ending the Korean War.

380
Meeting: A.Ia. Vyshinskii – Sh. Eliashiv (Moscow, 13 September 1951)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.4, P 9, D.5, L.11
Secret

I received Eliashiv for a protocol visit at 14.00.

At the end of our formal conversation, Eliashiv asked about my view of the so-called 'reunification of families', and what would be the attitude of the Soviet government towards his appeal for permission for Soviet citizens with families living in Israel to leave the country.

I answered that first I must look into the specific facts of the matter. It would not be possible to express an attitude towards his official approach until it had been made; the attitude would then depend on what was in the approach.

Eliashiv said that he would be making an official approach.[1]

The conversation lasted 15 minutes. Comrade Suslov was present.[2]

A. Vyshinskii

381
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/6
Moscow, 13 September 1951

My talk with Vyshinskii[1] was conducted in a cordial atmosphere. He asked about Sharett and recalled their conversations. [Evinced] interest in our problems and asked me to go ahead when I proposed to be brief because of his weak state. I told him about immigration from various countries and stressed the important contribution by the immigrants from Russia in the past and the value of immigration from Eastern Europe because of the cultural level of the immigrants and their commitment to the social principles of our entire enterprise. I pointed out the large-scale immigration from Romania and reminded him of his talks with Sharett. When I mentioned the difficulties of absorbing the immigrants and reclaiming the desert, he grew profuse in praise

Doc. 380
1. See Docs. 381, 383.
2. The following handwritten notes appear in the margin: 'Comrade Shchiborin, prepare our position on this question in the event of a second application. 14.11, Bogomolov. Comrade Zotov, deal with this, 15.11. Shchiborin.'

Doc. 381
1. See Doc. 380.

of the talents of the Jewish people and in encouraging us to overcome all our difficulties. He pointed to the outstanding qualities of our people, whom he knew from their political activity in the party. When I remarked that qualities were not enough and there were problems in transition from one profession to another and many [--],[2] he said: You shall overcome that, too – look at Birobidzhan. Towards the end of the talk I raised the problem of the emigration of relatives from the humanitarian aspect, pointed out that the issue of individual exit permits showed us that they had no objection in principle, and emphasized the favourable reaction in our country to such a step. He agreed that there was no objection in principle but that it all depended on who were the people that were to leave. It was agreed that I submit our arguments in writing,[3] and he concluded, laughing: 'Of course you have to act to this end to justify your presence here and to do something for your people.' The surprising thing about this conversation was that he addressed me several times as a representative not only of Israel but also of the Jews in general, and when he spoke about the Jews of Russia he referred to them as my people. We did not discuss political matters.

Eliashiv

382
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/6
Moscow, 4 October 1951

We went to the synagogue on the eve of the holiday and also on both days.[1] As usual, thousands of worshippers packed closely together, including many young people. An atmosphere of tension surrounded us, apprehension about approaching us and isolated attempts to exchange a few words. Two of them managed to give us important information in writing on the situation of the Jews. Spies within the synagogue observed our movements.

Eliashiv

Doc. 381
2. Decoding mistake in the original.
3. Doc. 383.

Doc. 382
1. Jewish holidays begin in the evening. Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, lasts two days.

383
Sh. Eliashiv to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

COPY: ISA 130.09/2502/8
Moscow, 21 October 1951
Translated from the Russian

To His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, A.Ia. Vyshinskii
Your Excellency,

In the conversation I had the honour to conduct with you on 12 September of this year,[1] I took the liberty of raising the question of divided families, part of whom are living in the Soviet Union and part in the State of Israel. Even prior to the conversation with Your Excellency on this question, I raised it in the conversation I had the honour to conduct with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. A.A. Gromyko.[2] At the end of the talk which I had the honour and the pleasure to hold with Your Excellency, I took the liberty of suggesting that I would submit my appeal regarding this question in writing, and you consented to examine my appeal. I am now taking the liberty of stating the essentials of the matter in this note.

1. The population of the State of Israel consists mostly of people who came from various countries in the world. This is not accidental, but is the result of a lengthy process, as yet incomplete, of the return of the Jewish people to its historic homeland. This process never stopped during past generations and gained momentum recently, beginning at the end of the last century, and in particular with the establishment of the State of Israel. At the time, in 1947, the Jewish people were especially gratified by the notable declaration by the representative of the USSR at the UN, Mr. A.A. Gromyko, which recognized the historic roots of the Jewish people in Palestine and their right to establish their state there.

2. Many of the inhabitants of Israel have come from the various republics of the Soviet Union. Some of them had already arrived in Palestine before World War I, and some – the overwhelming majority – in the period between the two world wars. There are among them not a few who have close relatives in the Soviet Union, who had planned to leave for Israel in 19[3]9 and were prevented from doing so by the last world war.

3. The end of the world war saw a new stream of immigrants who had experienced the torments and horrors of the Nazi extermination in the ghettos and death camps, and who became refugees after the downfall of the Nazi fascist regime. These people, who miraculously survived the mass extermination of the Jews, separated from their families and with no knowledge of the fate of those closest to them, wandered hopelessly from country to country looking for their families, and came to Israel without finding them. Other

1. See Docs. 380, 381.
2. See Docs. 370, 371.

similarly divided families, also wandering from place to place looking for kin who survived the Holocaust, found themselves in the territory of the Soviet Union. In addition, there are people in Israel whose families lived in Poland or Romania before the war and found refuge in the Soviet Union, and for various reasons did not manage to return to their countries during the repatriation.[3]

4. As a result, there exists today no small number of separated Jewish families survivors of the Holocaust, part of them living in Israel and the other part – in the Soviet Union. The desire of these families to reunite with their kin is natural and wholly justified.

The degrees of relationship between those who live in the Soviet Union and their kin in Israel – vary. There are old people among them, who have sons, grandchildren or cousins in Israel; there are men and women whose spouses are in Israel; sons and daughters whose parents live in Israel; orphans who have either older brothers and sisters in Israel, or other relatives, ready to take care of their education; people who were left alone with only distant relatives of various degrees in Israel.

5. The problem of the reunification of families is of primary importance at any place and at any time, and it calls for a humane approach. This problem becomes much more acute when it touches on divided Jewish families, survivors of the Nazi slaughter. Their spiritual need and their desire to be together with those few of their kin who have survived, are perfectly understandable. This is the most ardent desire of those families who live in Israel. At the same time, they are prepared to accept full responsibility for the maintenance of their relatives, when they arrive. This aspiration of theirs enjoys the full support of all the people of Israel.

6. The legation of which I am head is aware that the Soviet Union did not and does not have any objection in principle to the emigration of its citizens in order to be reunited with their families in Israel. There were quite a few cases before World War II when residents of the Soviet Union were allowed to leave and join their relatives in Israel. In a number of cases Soviet citizens were issued passports for travel to Israel subsequent to World War II.

7. In the name of my government, I am taking the liberty of requesting, through you, that the government of the USSR give favourable attention to the above matter, and permit those people referred to in paragraph 4 to leave for Israel to join their families there. I feel it my obligation to declare solemnly that extensive permission by the Soviet government to enable these divided families to reunite will be seen by all the citizens of Israel as a friendly act by the Soviet Union towards the State of Israel.

8. Your Excellency, I am perfectly aware of the need to check each case individually before issuing an exit permit from the Soviet Union to the State of

3. For the repatriation from the USSR to Poland and Romania of Jews who held Polish or Romanian citizenship in 1939, see Docs. 66, n. 9 and Doc. 234.

Israel. It is my request that the Soviet government adopt a generally affirmative resolution on this issue on the basis of which the individual enquiries would be carried out with a positive inclination. At the same time, I take the liberty of requesting that, after a general affirmative resolution has been adopted by the Soviet government, the procedure the issue of exit permits be as uncomplicated and as brief as possible – seeing that these people have been separated from their families for many years and have undergone harrowing experiences.

9. May I express the hope that the above will meet with the approval of the Soviet government. Should that be the case, I would have the honour to request Your Excellency kindly to instruct the ministry of which you are head to expedite discussions with the Israeli legation on the procedure and details of implementing this decision.

I take this opportunity, Your Excellency, to express to you my highest consideration.

Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the State of Israel
Sh. Eliashiv

384
Meeting: S.T. Bazarov – Sh. Eliashiv (Moscow, 26 October 1951)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.4, P.9, D.6, LL.19–20

I received Eliashiv at 18.00 today at his request. After exchanging greetings, Eliashiv stated that on instructions from the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he had come to the USSR Foreign Ministry to say that the government of Israel had decided to put forward the name of J. Robinson, the legal adviser representing Israel at the UN, as a candidate for the post of chairman of the Sixth (Judicial) Committee at the forthcoming Sixth Session of the General Assembly of the UN. Eliashiv was authorized to ask that the Soviet delegation support this Israeli candidacy.

Eliashiv told me that Robinson, a personal friend of his, was familiar with working conditions at the UN, spoke all the basic official languages used at the UN, and was a well-known international lawyer. As a specialist on international affairs, Robinson, according to Eliashiv, worked as adviser to the American prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials. At the Fifth Session of the General Assembly he was deputy chairman of the Sixth Committee.

Eliashiv went on to say that if the choice of a chairman of the Sixth Committee was made simply on personal qualities, then Robinson would certainly be elected. But we know that other considerations played a part in such cases.

After this, Eliashiv gave me a brief curriculum vitae of Robinson (attached).

I accepted this document, had a look at it, and told Eliashiv that I would bring his request to the attention of the authorities in the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

At the end of our conversation the minister remarked that since the session of the General Assembly of the UN was about to begin, he might be approaching the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs on some other points.

I let this remark pass without reacting to it.

The conversation lasted for 10 minutes.

Comrade A.I. Tat'ianchenko, first secretary in the Near and Middle East Department, was present at the meeting.[1]

Deputy Director of the Near and Middle East Department
S. Bazarov

385
M.G. Gribanov and S.T. Bazarov to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.4, P.4, D.19, LL.22–4
Moscow, 27 October 1951
Secret

With regard to the verbal approach of the Israeli minister, Eliashiv, to the Soviet Foreign Ministry on 23 October about our reply to the government of Israel's note of 12 March (which is attached), we have to report as follows:

1. In its note of 12 March 1951, Israel asserted its right to demand reparations from Germany for the Jewish people. The total figure for reparations is given in the note as 1.5 billion dollars and consists of expenses borne by Israel for the settlement and rehabilitation of Jewish refugees who arrived in Israel from countries under Nazi domination. The government of Israel expressed the hope that the USSR would recognize the justice of Israel's claims and asked that 'the occupying powers not hand over full powers to any German government without explicit stipulations having been made for the payment of reparations to Israel'.

Israel sent similar notes to the governments of the US, Britain and France.[1]

2. It should also be observed that in its note of 16 January, the government of Israel laid the entire responsibility on the Germans for the damages caused to the Jews and asked the Soviet authorities in Germany to introduce measures for restitution and compensation for the property of all Jews from whom it had been taken illegally between 30 January 1933 and 8 May 1945. Israel also insisted on 'an agreement on favourable terms for the transfer of income from

---

Doc. 384

1. A handwritten note is appended: 'Comrade Vyshinskii's resolution. Comrade Bazarov, you know that the [chairman] of the Sixth Committee is usually elected from our group. Why did you avoid this issue? 27.10.51, A. Vyshinskii.'

Doc. 385

1. See Editorial Note, p. 684.

property and from claims, in accordance with principles on which the interested parties will have to agree'.

3. With regard to Israel's demand for reparations from Germany, Comrades Semichastnov and Il'ichev reported that, in their opinion, we should avoid giving a direct response on the substance of this demand, but should tell the Israelis in general terms that the government of the USSR would not object to hearing and considering Israel's claims for reparations from Germany when a peace treaty with Germany is concluded.

4. On 19 May Comrade Bogomolov, following the conclusion reached by the Legal Department, the Near and Middle East Department and the Third European Division, and sent instructions to the Soviet embassies in the US, Britain and France, and also to the Soviet legation in Israel, to find out whether the governments of the US, Britain and France had answered the Israeli Foreign Ministry's notes.

It emerged from the answers received from Comrades Paniushkin, Zarubin and Ershov that the government of Israel had not yet received any official reply to its notes to the Western powers, and that the US has reservations about Israel's claims.[2]

Comrade Zorin agreed with the proposals of the Legal Department, the Near and Middle East Department and the Third European Division of 2 August that we refrain for the time being from answering Israel's notes about restitution and reparations from Germany.

5. When he called at the Soviet Foreign Ministry on 23 October, the Israeli minister Eliashiv asked us to be precipitate with our answer to the note of 12 March about Israel's demand for reparations from Germany.

At the same time he said that in answer to this question, the governments of the US, Britain and France had said that, since reparations from Germany were already under discussion, in Paris among other places,[3] they could not raise it again now. In their opinion, the question of Israeli claims for reparations from Germany should be left open until a peace treaty is concluded with Germany.

In view of the above, we put forward the following proposals for your consideration:

1. No answer should be given to the notes of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 16 January and 12 March 1951 about restitution and reparations from Germany.

2. If Israeli minister Eliashiv raises the question of reparations again in conversation at the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he should be answered

---

2. For the unofficial reactions to the Israeli note of 16 January, see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 6, *Companion Volume*, pp. 16–17; for the Western powers' reply to the 12 March note, see *Ibid.*, No. 254, pp. 438–41; *Companion Volume*, Editorial Note, p. 188.
3. Reference is to the meeting of the deputy foreign ministers of the USSR, Britain, France and the US, that took place in Paris from 5 March to 21 June. This meeting was supposed to work out an agenda for the foreign ministers' meeting but it reached a deadlock over the question of international disarmament.

verbally that since reparations have already been the subject of discussion between various states which suffered material losses as a result of German aggression, and since certain international agreements have been reached on this issue, the Soviet Union can not undertake any obligations with regard to the matter.

The draft of a verbal reply to the Israeli minister is attached.[4]

M. Gribanov, S. Bazarov

Editorial Note

VYSHINSKII'S UNFINISHED DRAFT MEMORANDUM ON JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM THE USSR

After arriving in Moscow in June 1951 as Israel's new minister to the USSR, Eliashiv repeatedly met with representatives of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs to discuss prospects for the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel (see Docs. 370, 371, 380, 381).

In response to Vyshinskii's proposal to present his considerations in written form, on 2 October 1951 Eliashiv submitted to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs a note dealing with the issue of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union (Doc. 383). Following receipt of the note, Vyshinskii instructed Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ia. Malik urgently to prepare a draft letter to Stalin, a draft of the Communist Party Central Committee's resolution and a draft reply to the Israeli minister in Moscow. On 25 October 1951, Malik transmitted all these drafts to Vyshinskii (AVP RF, f.018, op.12, p.28, d.10, ll.1–9).

Malik's draft referred to Eliashiv's note and confirmed that the government of Israel, via its representative in Moscow, had tried on numerous occasions to promote Jewish emigration from the USSR under the guise of reunification of families. He emphasized that there should not be any comprehensive discussion of the issue nor should any formal written response be given. Malik proposed that, instead, the Israeli minister be summoned and that it should be explained to him orally that the 'departure' [*vyezd*] of Soviet citizens to a different social system would contradict the law and basic principles of the Soviet state; therefore every case of emigration should be processed on a strictly individual basis.

Vyshinskii crossed out the entire text and on another copy of it tried to make revisions. The tendency in his insertions (above the lines in the margin of the documents) was to put a finer point on Malik's formulations; for instance, he characterized the Israeli request for Jewish emigration as a request

---

4. Not on file. A handwritten note is appended: 'Maybe better to add that the question of reparations should be resolved during negotiation of the peace treaty. No need to speak about Soviet obligations, A. Vyshinskii, 30.10.' See also Doc. 409.

to permit 'mass departure' [*massovyi vyezd*]. While Malik spoke of the Israeli government's efforts to achieve an agreement on emigration under the guise of reunification of families, Vyshinskii stressed that the government of Israel had officially raised the issue of emigration on the 'pretext of "reuniting Jewish families"'. Vyshinskii deleted Malik's assertion of the incompatibility of emigration of Soviet citizens into a different social system with the basic principles and laws of the Soviet state. Ultimately, Vyshinskii abandoned the revision effort and returned the copy to Malik with the following handwritten note: 'Comrade Malik. Requires discussion [*n[ado] obsudit'*]. It seems that the text has to be completely reformulated.' (Regarding further deliberation on Jewish emigration within the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, see Docs. 400, 404 and 407).

386
A.A. Gromyko to P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.4, P.9, D.9, LL.211–2
Moscow, 15 November 1951
Secret

To your No. 260/s of 13 August 1951.[1]

In confirming receipt of the report of the USSR legation in Israel for the second quarter of 1951, the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers it necessary to indicate that, although this report touches upon the basic issues which ought to be reflected in such a document, it has, nevertheless, several basic shortcomings, namely:

1. Israel's financial situation is described in a slipshod way, without any general conclusions.

The report does not contain any detailed analysis of the data on the Israeli government's budgetary revenue and expenditures. The pertinent tables in the report were, evidently, copied mechanically from some reference work, were not systematized for the purpose of the report, and, therefore, they basically only encumber the report.

2. Only two paragraphs in the report deal with the state of the country's agriculture, and they give no idea of this issue (p. 9).

3. The report mentions only in passing (p. 15) that the peace movement in Israel has recently been stagnant because of the lack of cooperation between the Zionist party Mapam and the Communist Party. This assertion, concerning

1. See Doc. 375.

such an important issue as the peace movement, is neither confirmed by anything nor developed in the report.

Moreover, the report as a whole is poorly edited, and contains repetitions and inaccurate formulations (pp. 3, 7, 8, 12, 14, 19).

Regarding the legation's practical suggestions in the report, we state the following:

a) The proposal to be more active in publishing exposés in the Soviet press concerning Anglo-American intrigues in Israel and the reactionary domestic and pro-American foreign policy of the Israeli government is correct. The legation must send Moscow, more frequently, specific material on this issue for use in the Soviet press.

b) The legation's proposal that the Soviet property issue be brought before the prime minister and then the president was not sufficiently substantiated for a decision to be reached at this time.

You and the representative of the Russian Palestine Society should speed up the presentation of specific proposals in connection with the decision of the Collegium of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 19 February 1951 on the question of our subsequent position in this regard.

c) The legation's proposal to intensify work in Israel within the framework of VOKS and to increase funding for these purposes was also not vindicated. If you consider that the work of the VOKS representative has to be expanded and that this requires additional funds, you must justify this in detail, indicating how much money is required and for what purposes. Otherwise, it is not possible to consider your proposal.

You must undertake measures to eliminate these failings in particular in compiling the legation's future quarterly reports of the mission.

Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR
A. Gromyko

387
Note from the Government of the USSR to the Government of Israel

COPY: AVP RF, F.022, OP.4, P.54, D.2, LL.53–7
Moscow, 21 November 1951

The Soviet government considers it necessary to inform the government of Israel of the following:

On 14 October proposals by the governments of the US, Britain, France and Turkey were published in the press in which they officially approached the government of Egypt to create a so-called allied Middle East Command for the joint 'defence' of the Near and Middle East. It is also known that these proposals were made to the governments of Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Israel and Transjordan. On 10 November, the declaration of the

governments of the United States of America, Britain, France and Turkey, which had been conveyed to the governments named above was published.

These proposals envisage the creation of an allied Middle East Command, in which foreign armed forces would be deployed on the territory of Egypt and other countries of the Near and Middle East. The headquarters of this command would also be situated on Egyptian territory, and Egypt and other countries in the area would make available armed forces, military bases, communications, ports and other installations. These proposals also envisage that the so-called Middle East Command would be linked to the organization of the Atlantic bloc.

It follows from the proposals and the Four-Power Declaration that the demand by the states concerned for the creation of such an allied command is intended to involve the states of the Near and Middle East in military measures taken by the Atlantic bloc under the pretext of organizing the 'defence' of this region.

As the Soviet government has frequently indicated in its official documents, the aims of the Atlantic bloc have nothing to do with the defence of its members. On the contrary, the facts show that the bloc is pursuing aggressive goals and is directed against the USSR and the People's Democracies. Moreover, the aims of the Atlantic bloc contradict the basic principles of the United Nations, whose mission is the support of peace and the establishment of friendly relations between peoples and not the creation of blocs of states directed against other states.

The measures taken by the organizers of the Atlantic bloc in Europe and elsewhere show that the bloc is a weapon of the aggressive imperialist policy of its organizers, headed by the United States of America. This, in itself, shows that the plan to create the Middle East Command envisaged in the proposals of the four countries has nothing to do with the interests of supporting peace and security in the Near and Middle East, nor with the genuine national interests of the states in the area. This can also be seen from the fact that the organization of this command is linked to wide-ranging plans for the creation of new, and the extension of existing, military bases in Egypt, Iraq and other countries of the Near and Middle East; it involves the prolongation of the presence of these forces in these countries and the introduction of new foreign armed forces on their soil, contrary to the clearly expressed desire of the populations of these countries.

The realization of the plan to create the so-called Middle East Command would lead in practice to the military occupation of the countries of the Near and Middle East by the troops of the organizers of the Atlantic bloc, primarily the US, Britain and also some other states, including Australia and New Zealand, which are 12–15,000 kilometres from the region. It is easy to see what this situation would mean for the countries of the Near and Middle East based on the experience of some of them, occupied many years ago by foreign troops that are still there today in spite of the legitimate demands of the

peoples of these countries for the removal of foreign troops from their territory.

The occupation of the countries of the Near and Middle East by foreign troops and the creation of foreign military bases on their territory in accordance with plans for the formation of a Middle East Command can only lead to the loss of independence and sovereignty by these countries and to their subjection to certain large states which want to utilize their territory and their material resources – oil, cotton etc. – in their aggressive schemes.

Any reference to the defence interests of the countries of the Near and Middle East is, in fact, mere camouflage, which masks the involvement of these countries in military measures taken by the Atlantic bloc and directed against the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies.

In this connection, the Soviet government considers it necessary to emphasize the generally acknowledged fact that the Soviet government, from the first days of the existence of the Soviet state, has acted with understanding and sympathy towards the national aspirations of the peoples of the East and towards their struggle for national independence and sovereignty. In contrast to the powers which have grown accustomed to regarding the countries of the Near and Middle East as their colonies, the Soviet Union, pursuing its consistent policy of supporting the just national demands of peoples both large and small, has always recognized that they have the right to self-determination including the creation of a self-governing independent state, as is well known to the people of Israel. This Soviet policy coincides not only with fundamental national interests of the peoples of the Near and Middle East but also with the interests of supporting universal peace.

The Soviet government has always steadfastly pursued a policy of peace. This is borne out by its practical proposals aimed at strengthening peace and security, which the Soviet Union has frequently promoted in the past and is promoting now in the United Nations, calling for an end to the arms race, a ban on nuclear weapons, the reduction by one-third of the armed forces of the five Great Powers, an end to the aggressive war in Korea, and the conclusion of a peace treaty.

All this shows the absurdity of allegations of some sort of threat to the countries of the Near and Middle East, which are employed in an attempt to justify the creation of the so-called Middle East Command. It reveals the real aims of the governments of the US, Britain, France and Turkey in proposing the creation of such a command.

The Soviet government considers it necessary to direct the attention of the government of Israel to the fact that the participation of Israel in the so-called Middle East Command will inflict serious damage on existing relations between the USSR and Israel, and also endanger the maintenance of peace and security in the Near and Middle East.[1]

1. Similar notes were handed to the representatives of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq. For the Israeli reply, see Doc. 389.

388
Reception by A.A. Gromyko of Diplomatic Representatives of Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon and Syria (Moscow, 21 November 1951)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.022, OP.4, P.54, D.2, LL.36–7

On 21 November, I summoned one after the other Egyptian minister, Anis al-Azr Bey; Syrian chargé d'affaires, Badi Hakki; Lebanese chargé d'affaires, Najjara; the Israeli minister, Eliashiv and the Iraqi chargé d'affaires, Husayn al-Gailani, and handed them notes from the Soviet government on the formation of the so-called Middle East Command (appended).[1]

Badi Hakki, Najjara, and Husayn al-Gailani asserted that they would immediately inform their governments about the content of the note.

After reading the note, Anis al-Azr Bey asserted that the Egyptian government had rejected the proposal of the four states for Egyptian participation in the formation of a Middle East Command.

I responded that the Soviet government knew about the Egyptian government's decision.

Anis al-Azr Bey asked me whether it would be better for him to send the contents of the note to Cairo by diplomatic pouch or by telegraph. I said that this depended on the minister himself but added that the text of the note which had been conveyed to him would be published in the Soviet press; therefore, in case of delay in dispatching the note, the Egyptian government would not know its contents before our publication of the note.

Anis al-Azr Bey stated that he would take all necessary measures to speedily telegraph the contents of the Soviet government's note to his government.

Having familiarized himself with the note, Eliashiv stated that the government of Israel had not received an official invitation from the governments of the US, Britain, France and Turkey to take part in the Middle East Command and had, allegedly, received information from these states about their proposal to Egypt.

I replied that the statement of the four governments about the organization of the Middle East Command spoke about the entire region of the Near and Middle East and that it was known that all Arab countries and Israel had received appropriate communications from the governments of the four states.

Eliashiv concurred and stated that he would convey the content of the Soviet government's note to his government.

In answer to Eliashiv's question whether the Soviet government's note to the government of Israel would be published, I replied that similar notes had been delivered to the other countries of the Near and Middle East and that, in the near future, one of them would be published in the Soviet press.

---

1. Document not traced, but see Doc. 387.

At the end of the conversation, Eliashiv asked to be received in the event that he got a reply from his government to the Soviet government's note.

I agreed.

Each conversation lasted from three to eight minutes. First Secretary of the Near and Middle East Department, Comrade Tat'ianchenko, was present at the conversations with Anis al-Azr Bey, Eliashiv and Husayn al-Gailani; First Secretary of the First European Department Comrade Shvedov, at the conversations with Badi Hakki and Najjara.

Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR,
A. Gromyko

389
Note Verbale from the Government of Israel to the Government of the USSR

COPY: ISA 130.20/2491/13

Tel Aviv, 8 December 1951

(1) The government of Israel has given due consideration and attention to the written reply dated 21 November [19]51 submitted to it by the government of the USSR.[1]

(2) Israel has not been invited to join the 'Middle East Command' and no question concerning its participation has arisen. Therefore, the government of Israel has not defined its view of the nature and form of the command. It is thus apparent that the government of Israel has not decided to join this command. At the same time, Israel has received a statement from the powers involved in organizing the 'Middle East Command' to the effect that this command has no aggressive intent or purpose.

(3) Israel considers its dominant security problem to be the threat posed by Arab countries that refuse to make peace with it. Since peace is indivisible, all members of the United Nations, especially the Great Powers, are obliged, in Israel's opinion, to take practical steps and vigorous action in order to remove this threat to the peace of Israel and the Middle East.

(4) Israel views the preservation of peace throughout the world as the loftiest objective of international policy. Likewise, Israel knows that world peace is essential to ensure its own safety, survival, future and development.

(5) Israel has defended and will always defend with all its might the precious asset that it has acquired by a long and costly struggle: national independence and sovereignty. Israel well remembers, and will not forget, that at a critical political stage its struggle for independence enjoyed the generous and most important support of the USSR.

---

1. See Doc. 387.

(6) Israel has not agreed and will not agree to assist aggressive acts or preparations against the Soviet Union or any other peace-loving country.

(7) With regard to paragraphs 4–6 above, Israel draws the attention of the government of the USSR to the news items repeatedly published during the last two years or so throughout the Soviet press, including the most responsible Soviet organs, concerning the ostensible establishment of foreign bases in Israel. These items are absolutely untrue, since no foreign military bases exist in our country; to our regret, these news items are liable to damage the relations between our two countries. The government of Israel, on the other hand, has a strong desire to maintain cordial relations with the Soviet Union.

(8) As the government of the USSR is aware, the return of Jews to their historic homeland constitutes the central *raison d'être* of the State of Israel. The government of Israel realizes that only the maintenance of world peace and normal relations among the various countries will allow us to develop our land and absorb all those Jews wishing to return. In this context, the government of Israel requests that the USSR allow those Jews in the Soviet Union who so wish, to emigrate to Israel. The government of Israel believes that this request is fully compatible with the policy of the USSR, which is based on national equality and the right of all peoples to self-determination.

(9) The government of Israel expresses its sincere hope that the exchange of opinions between the USSR and Israel on the matter at hand will clarify the problems that have arisen and lead to a further improvement of relations between the two countries.

390
Meeting: V.A. Zorin – Sh. Eliashiv (Moscow, 8 December 1951)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.4, P.9, D.5, L.12
Secret

At 13.30 today, 8 December 1951, I received the Israeli minister at his request.

Eliashiv said that he was authorized to make a statement in the name of the government of Israel in answer to the Soviet government's note of 21 November about the creation of a Middle East Command.[1]

Eliashiv then read the text of the statement (attached).[2]

When I had heard him out, I told the minister that the statement would be brought to the notice of the Soviet government.

Without dealing with the entire content of the statement, I remarked that it was well known that the Soviet press reports about the presence of foreign bases on Israeli territory, which were mentioned in the statement, were based

1. See Doc. 387.
2. See Doc 389.

on reports in the foreign press, including the Israeli press. We, however, had much greater reason to reproach the Israeli press with disloyalty to the USSR, considering the anti-Soviet material which appears regularly there.

I added that I did not consider it possible at present to raise the other issues in the Israeli government statement.

In response to my comment, Eliashiv said that the government of Israel, which referred in its statement to articles published in the Soviet press about the presence of foreign military bases on Israeli territory, wished to emphasize once more that these reports were completely groundless.

In conclusion, Eliashiv said that he would like to have some further opportunity to discuss the issues raised in the Israeli statement.

I answered that it would become clear whether such a discussion was needed after the Israeli government statement had been studied.

The conversation lasted 12 minutes. Comrade A.I. Tat'ianchenko, first secretary of the Near and Middle East Department, was present.[3]

USSR Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
V. Zorin

391
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/6
Moscow, 9 December 1951

(a) Your 624 came an hour after I had returned from the meeting. A pity you did not cable yesterday.[1]

(b) I was received by Zorin. After I had read out the statement, Zorin said that he would transmit its content to the government and could not give me an answer on the spot; he commented only on the passage about the press, saying that the reports published in the newspapers originated in other countries, including Israel. What appears in the press should not affect relations between states which are determined by other factors. Were the press

---

Doc. 390

3. Sent to Stalin, Molotov, Malenkov, Beria, Mikoian, Kaganovich, Bulganin, Khrushchev, Vyshinskii, Gromyko, Bogomolov, Gusev, Podtserob and Bazarov.

Doc. 391

1. Reference is to an exchange of telegrams between Eliashiv and Eytan in which the former suggested some alterations in the substance and style of the Israeli note — Doc. 389 (see Eliashiv to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2 Dec. 1951, ISA 130.09/2325/6; Eytan to Eliashiv, 6 Dec. 1951, ISA 130.09/2325/5). In the latter telegram Eytan instructed Eliashiv to put off delivery of the note until the suggested alteration could be authorized by the prime minister.

a factor in relations between states, they would perhaps have more complaints about some of our newspapers.

I replied that we did not intend issuing directives to the press in other countries, but I felt I had just submitted an authentic declaration that the reports about us in the press were not true. I ended by expressing the hope that I would soon be afforded an opportunity for an exchange of views between us with respect to various points in the declaration.

(c) We are keeping the fact of the submission of our response secret. We are awaiting your instructions about making it public.

Eliashiv

392
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.26, P.58, D.362, LL.81–4
Tel Aviv, 16 December 1951

We have been reliably informed that, according to Sharett's telegram, his conversation with Acheson on 19 November in Paris concerned the following subjects:[1]

1. Sharett expressed his complete satisfaction with Acheson's speech at the United Nations session[2] and assured him that Israel would carefully guard its democratic way of life and in case of danger would know how to defend democracy.

2. Sharett asked whether a situation could arise in which the Western powers' troops would leave the Middle East. He recalled in this context that during World War II, General Wavell told Jewish representatives that it might be necessary to retreat from Palestine to the east and from Egypt to the south. If this had been done, then the Israeli cause would have been ruined.[3] If such a situation arose in the future, it would mean the defeat of their cause, the

1. The meeting between Acheson and Sharett took place during the General Assembly session in Paris. For an extensive report of this meeting, see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 6, pp. 808–19. It is not clear to what telegram Ershov is referring; this document indicates, however, that Ershov had in his possession a reasonably accurate resumé of the Sharett–Acheson conversation.
2. Reference is to Acheson's speech in the First Committeee of the UN General Assembly on 19 November 1951.
3. Sharett's sentence read: 'At a certain early stage in the last world war, Field Marshal Wavell admitted in a conversation with me that he might have to retreat from Egypt southwards and from Palestine eastwards, whereas we would have no choice but to stay on and see the work of three generations go up in smoke between two swings of the pendulum of the Allied war fortunes' (*Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 6, p. 810).

establishment of a dictatorship and the death of many people. Would the US and Britain send sufficient military forces to defend the Middle East? Sharett said that he had not had an answer from Acheson, noting parenthetically that he did not expect one, but had merely wanted to ask the question.

3. On the subject of the Middle East Command, Sharett said that Israel's reserved attitude on the issue of its participation was due to two factors: the first was its unsettled relations with the Arab states. The Western powers had invited Egypt, the most powerful of Israel's enemies. Egypt had refused the invitation, but it could change its mind. Acheson commented that Egypt would not join the command now. Sharett said that in his last speech, Eden had stated that the door was still open for Egypt to take part.[4] The second reason, according to Sharett, was the need to continue emigration from the countries of Eastern Europe. If Israel took part in the command, then Jews in the USSR and other countries of Eastern Europe would be regarded as disloyal.

It was not only Israel which needed immigration. The West would gain nothing from the cessation of immigration [to Israel]. Acheson asked how many Jews were living in the USSR and each of the People's Democracies; Sharett gave the figures, and Ambassador Palmer, who was present at the meeting, wrote them down.

For this reason, according to Sharett, Israel could not yet come out as an open enemy of the USSR. It might not always vote with the West, 'but you must not lose even a minute's sleep over this'. (Sharett noted that Acheson was very pleased with this phrase.) Israel's avoidance of an openly hostile attitude to the USSR stemmed from its national interests. However, they had certain interests in common with the West in this matter – 'the Soviets will be able to speak more freely with us'. Israel had no interest in formal participation in the command but in a special practical agreement which would establish a direct link with Britain and the US.[5]

Acheson answered that he fully understood this position and was delighted with Sharett's proposal to set up a direct link which would not affect the question of the Arab states but would help to bring them into the command. There was now a new concept of how to organize the command, arising from the difficulties experienced in the initial period.[6] There would be a centre for

---

4. As follows from the printed record of the conversation, Sharett learned from a newspaper of Eden's speech in the House of Commons (19 November 1951) on the day after the meeting with Acheson and inserted it as a note to his record (ibid., p. 811).
5. Compare Sharett's printed record: 'I wanted to take the opportunity of offering a few words on the general subject of our relations with Russia. I had already explained why we were so anxious not to give them an easy excuse for writing us off completely as their enemies, but of remaining at least on speaking terms with them. It isn't that we were afraid of a rupture with them for our own sake, for what could they do to us? But we feared that they would avenge themselves on their Jews... On the other hand the Soviet Union itself might some day accept from us a proposal with which they would find it difficult to concur if it came officially from the United States – their arch-enemy' (ibid. p. 814–15).
6. Compare Sharett's printed record: 'A change had come about in Western planning for the Middle East as a result of the Egyptian refusal to join' (ibid., p. 814).

cooperation with those states which had expressed the desire for it. But if war broke out, this cooperation would take on a new character and become extremely close. Answering Acheson, Sharett explained that the special agreement ought to be linked to the plan for the development of Israel, especially communications, the armed forces and industry.

Britain, for example, had offered to transfer to Israel the production of a number of goods, which would reduce the burden on British industry. Israel would be interested in a similar proposal from the US.

4. Sharett raised the question of a new subsidy for Israel in 1952.[7] Emphasizing the US government's favourable attitude to previous requests from Israel, he expressed the hope that the State Department would support the proposal for a new subsidy. Acheson said that, in his opinion, such support would be forthcoming.

5. Sharett explained Israel's position on reparations from Germany and asked whether the US could help Israel get reparations from the Bonn government. Acheson answered that he could not yet give a definite opinion on this. He had nothing against Germany paying reparations out of its own resources. But since Germany was in fact maintained by the US, it could not be allowed to pay American money to other countries.[8]

6. In conclusion, Sharett commented that the re-militarization of Germany would create a threat to world peace, but Acheson made no comment on this.

Ershov

393
Meeting: A.D. Shchiborin – Z. Argaman (Moscow, 21 December 1951)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.4, P.9, D.6, LL.26–9

At 16.00 on 21 December 1951, I received Argaman at his request. After the usual greetings, Argaman informed me of the following:

I. In May 1952, Israel's Scientific Research Council[1] intends to hold a conference of scholars on the exploration and development of deserts, with the participation of foreign experts on the subject. The Israeli Scientific

Doc. 392

7. See Doc. 355 and n. 4 there.
8. On 27 September 1951 Chancellor Konrad Adenauer declared in the Bundestag: 'The Federal Republic of Germany is prepared, together with representatives of Jewry and the State of Israel, which has admitted so many homeless Jewish refugees, to bring about a resolution of the material indemnity problem' (*Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel* 6 (1951), p. 666).

Doc. 393

1. The Israel Research Council, a section of the Prime Minister's Office, coordinated research on natural resources, agriculture and industry.

Research Council will run this conference in cooperation with the international organization UNESCO.

The Israeli legation has been instructed to approach Soviet scholars in the field of desert research with an invitation to take part in the work of the forthcoming conference. The Israeli Scientific Research Council wishes to invite the well-known Soviet scholar Professor Lebedev and will pay all the expenses of his trip to Israel. During his stay in Israel he will be the guest of the Israeli government. However, the council would like to know in advance whether Professor Lebedev would be able to accept Israel's invitation. If for any reason he is unable to attend the conference, the Israeli legation asks that the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs assist in sending the invitation to another Soviet scholar known for his research on deserts. Initially, the Israeli legation wanted to settle this through VOKS in Moscow, but, according to the protocol department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the board of VOKS in Moscow has no direct contact with foreign representative bodies. The Israeli legation therefore had to turn to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Summing up, Argaman emphasized that he was making a dual request: first, advising the Israeli legation how and to which scholars conference invitations should be sent, and second, that the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs help the legation ensure that a Soviet scholar would indeed take part in the work of the conference.

In response to Argaman's statement, I told him that, as regards the first part of his request, I would first have to make the appropriate inquiries about the current procedure for inviting Soviet scholars and find out how the ministry could help the Israeli legation in this matter. As regards the second part of the question, whether the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs could help the legation ensure the participation of Soviet scholars in the conference, I promised to bring Argaman's request to the notice of the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I also reminded him that, as he knew, the Soviet Union was not a member of UNESCO.

Argaman replied that UNESCO's contribution to the conference of scholars in Israel would be limited to the provision of some supplementary funds for the organization of a conference, which was very important to Israel, and said that the conference would have a strictly academic character. Argaman added that the Israeli government's purpose in pursuing this matter was to promote the development of the Negev desert; the participation of a Soviet scholar would undoubtedly be most helpful to Israel, since it was well known that a great deal of work in desert development was going on in the USSR.[2]

I promised Argaman that I would make the necessary enquiries and let him know the answers.

---

2. The reference is to a program of massive construction, including irrigation canals, undertaken in the 1950s in areas of southern Russia and Central Asia (see Doc. 342 and n. 4 there).

2. Argaman then asked me to advise him how to restore the arrangement (which had existed in the past) for the exchange of books between Agricultural Research Institute in Israel and agricultural institutes in the USSR. Argaman asked whether VOKS had a representative in Israel.

I told the counsellor that the representative of VOKS in Israel was Popov, the second secretary of the USSR legation in Israel, and that in my view, book exchanges between the agricultural institutes in the USSR and Israel could be arranged through the representative of VOKS in Israel.

Argaman agreed to this and said that he would advise the interested departments in Israel to use this path of communication with scientific institutions in the USSR.

3. Argaman then raised the question of the Israeli legation's approaches to the Protocol Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Argaman began by saying that it was not in order to register a complaint but simply so that the Near and Middle East Department could help the Israeli legation to become acquainted with the industries and cultural institutions in the Soviet Union.

Argaman went on:

In August the Israeli legation approached the Protocol Department with a request to organize a visit to a collective farm, but this had still not taken place.[3]

The legation had also approached the Protocol Department with a request to organize a trip to a factory, but the factory visited was the Red October chocolate factory, and the members of the Israel legation were unable to become familiar with the cultural and social services of this enterprise. This was a question of great importance to the legation, for it would enable the young Israeli state to make use of the experience of the Soviet Union.

I answered Argaman that the questions he had raised were wholly within the competence of the Protocol Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs and that I would let that department know of the Israeli legation's desire to have a greater opportunity to familiarize themselves with various Soviet institutions.

At the end of our conversation, Argaman raised the question of the work of the UN General Assembly session.

In Argaman's opinion, there was no nation or government in the world, with the possible exception of the US government, which wanted war. Argaman is following the proceedings of the Assembly closely and has concluded that the main obstacle to the achievement of world peace is a certain fear of the Soviet Union among the Western powers.

I replied by saying that the Soviet Union's specific proposals for the conclusion of a peace pact among the Great Powers, for arms reduction, for

---

3. The staff of the Israeli legation was, in fact, permitted to visit a kolkhoz in the vicinity of Moscow in October 1950 (see Namir, *Shlihut beMoskva*, p. 216 and Docs. 338 and 341).

banning atomic weapons and for international control had shown convincingly to the whole world its sincere aim of achieving peace and international cooperation.

The conversation lasted 40 minutes.

Comrade A.I. Tat'ianchenko, first secretary in the Near and Middle East Department, was present.

A.D. Shchiborin

394
Meeting: A.Ia. Vyshinskii – M. Sharett (Paris, 22 December 1951)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.26, P.63, D.3, L.92

On 22 December I received Sharett at his request. He again started to talk about helping those Jews who had expressed the desire to emigrate to Israel from the Soviet Union.[1] Sharett said that our policy on this was contrary to the history of the Jewish people and that he could not understand why Jews should be prevented from emigrating from the USSR to Israel. He also reminded me of the Israeli government's request that Jews with relatives in Israel should be allowed to emigrate from the USSR to Israel.[2]

I flatly rejected Sharett's assertion that the USSR was acting, as he put it, contrary to the history of the Jewish people and reminded him of the Soviet Union's attitude to the State of Israel from its very founding.

I also pointed out that his statement that we were preventing people who wanted to go to Israel from doing so was quite baseless and made the point that there was no such thing as a group of Soviet citizens who wanted to leave the USSR and go to live in Israel.

As for the Soviet Union's policy towards Israel, I drew Sharett's attention to Israel's policy towards the USSR, and emphasized that at this session [of the UN General Assembly],[3] the Israeli delegation had continually supported aggressive American policy and even voted against our resolution on the law of 10 October allocating 100 million dollars for subversive activity against the USSR and the People's Democracies, once again supporting the US against us.[4]

Sharett tried to justify himself by saying that the government of Israel was economically dependent on the US, and was unable to act freely, for fear of losing American loans and supplies.

---

1. See Sharett's report of the meeting in Doc. 397.
2. See Docs. 370, 378 and 380.
3. Reference is to the Sixth Session.
4. On 22 November 1951 the USSR proposed that the agenda of the Assembly's Sixth Session include the item 'Aggressive acts of the United States of America and its interference in the

The conversation lasted about half an hour.

In connection with yesterday's conversation, Sharett sent me a letter today[5] in Russian with the following content:

Dear Mr. Vyshinskii,

I consider it my duty and my heartfelt need to express my gratitude for our candid conversation and for the trust which you have shown me personally.

In connection with our vote yesterday in the First Committee, I neglected to mention the main justification. The Soviet Union's draft resolution called for the rejection of the whole of the American law on mutual security, a measure from which we, the State of Israel, have received the sum of 65 million dollars. We could not do otherwise than vote against a resolution which rejected this invaluable aid, which is now being turned into food, fuel, raw materials and machines. I thought it necessary to add this essential and decisive explanation.

I wish you a good rest and good health.

I sincerely hope that we shall soon move forward to a solution of the question of the relatives of inhabitants of Israel.

With sincere respect,

M. Sharett

(cont.) domestic affairs of other countries, as exemplified by the appropriation of 100 million dollars to pay for the recruitment of persons and the organization of armed groups in the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania and a number of other democratic countries and outside the territory of these countries'. The Assembly included the item in its agenda and referred it to the First Committee. After discussing the Soviet proposal on 19–21 December 1951, the First Committee rejected the Soviet draft resolution by a vote of 39 to 5, with 11 abstentions.

5. Over the word 'today' is written '23.12'.

395
Report on VOKS Activities in Israel

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.5, P.14, D.36, LL.9–14
Secret
[Moscow] 1 January 1952

REPORT ON THE WORK OF VOKS IN ISRAEL, 1951

Work within the framework of VOKS in Israel is carried out by the authorized representative of VOKS and the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR. Working conditions have become even more difficult in 1951. The main division of the league in Tel Aviv did not have its own premises for the organization of events: exhibitions, ceremonial evenings, film screenings, etc. The organizational structure of the league continued to be slipshod. The central leadership of the league had no contact with its branches. The collection of membership dues was irregular, which weakened the league financially. The Presidium of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR intended to hold the league's 4th congress in 1951, at which all these questions were to be resolved. But so far we have had no word about the convening of this congress.

The main activity of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR in 1951 was mounting VOKS' photographic exhibitions. Three exhibitions were mounted in Israel in 1951:

1. The Malyi Theatre of the USSR
2. The Soviet Book
3. Soviet Graphic Art

The Soviet Book exhibition was organized by the league jointly with the Israeli firm Haifalepak. More than 2,500 people saw the exhibition, which was opened on 12 May 1951. Numerous favourable and even enthusiastic comments were entered in the visitors' book there. The entire Israeli press, including right-wing papers, carried good reviews and articles about the exhibition. The Soviet Book exhibition increased public interest in Soviet culture and the demand for Soviet literature in Israel. After showing in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem, the exhibition Soviet Graphic Art was displayed in Rishon Lezion from 5 to 15 May.

The director of VOKS in Israel notes that 'the quality and staging of some of the exhibitions sent by VOKS do not fulfill the demands of mass political agitation. For instance, a small-scale and poorly organized exhibition such as that on the Malyi Theatre, can not adequately reflect the work of one of the best Soviet theatres. And, unfortunately, the Malyi Theatre exhibition was no exception.'

We should send more exhibitions to Israel such as Soviet Graphic Art (i.e., with objects for display). The libraries in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem, which were created by the local sections of the league on the basis of literature sent

by VOKS, continued their work in 1951, as did the Russian-language courses, consisting of two groups – first year and second year. Some 20–25 members of the league are studying in these courses. The lack of a Russian language primer for Hebrew speakers makes it more difficult to attract new people to these courses. Besides Russian language courses, the Tel Aviv branch of the league has organized a seminar for study of the USSR. This is a unique series of lectures on the Soviet Union, dealing with such topics as 'The State Structure of the USSR', 'The Constitution of the USSR', 'People's Construction Projects in the USSR', 'Industry and Agriculture in the USSR', etc. The lectures are given by active members of the league, and are illustrated by relevant films and slides.

The League for Friendly Relations with the USSR continued to publish its journal *Israel–USSR* in 1951. However, owing to financial problems and difficulties with censorship engineered by government officials, the league was able to publish only three issues.

In 1951 the department received fifteen requests from representatives of VOKS in Iraq, Egypt and Israel. Of these ten were fulfilled or referred to the appropriate Soviet institutions.

One of the requests which we were able to satisfy was that submitted by the director of VOKS in Israel, who asked us to send some Soviet operettas for the recently created Israeli Musical Theatre, which would help the theatre offer a repertoire free of American influence to which most of the cultural institutions in Israel are subjected. We sent the librettos and piano scores for the operettas *Trembita* and *Free Spirit*. The score and libretto of the operetta *The Marriage in Malinovka* are ready to be sent.

Three requests were not granted, since VOKS was unable to satisfy them.

K. Chigar'kov

396
Sh. Kaddar to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

COPY: ISA 130.11/2507/11
Brussels, 2 January 1952

I wish to bring to your attention certain information that seems to me so fantastic that I would surely have treated it with great suspicion if somebody had told it to me – except that I heard it first-hand.

This concerns a quiet and friendly conversation with the staff of the Soviet embassy in Brussels and their decision and commitment to work for Jewish emigration from Russia.

Here is the story: At a reception held by the Cercle Diplomatique de Bruxelles (a private body headed by Belgian citizens wishing to have regular contact with the diplomatic corps and thus facilitating contacts between members of the corps themselves), Gennadii Nikolaevich Karpov, a first secretary in the Soviet embassy, searched me out and started chatting with me on this and that.

While we were standing there talking, I was approached by a group consisting of various nationals, Belgians, Haitians, Indonesians, Persians and others – students and diplomats – and they invited me to go out with them 'on the town' after the reception. Assuming that he would find some excuse not to do so, I invited the Russian to join us. To my great surprise, he accepted my invitation. When we left the building he dismissed his driver and joined me in my car. Most of the evening, the two of us talked, and he poured his heart out to me, complaining about his loneliness and about the lack of contact with local residents and institutions. The talk gradually turned to matters touching upon Russia and Israel and then to the issue of immigration, and then as a matter of course and quite naturally to the problem of the emigration of Russia's Jews. When we reached this point, Mr. Karpov suggested that, as this was too wide-ranging and serious a subject to be discussed in these circumstances, we should meet again to discuss it in all its aspects. When I drove him at a late (or perhaps one should say early) hour to the embassy, where his living quarters were, he parted from me with distinct demonstrations of friendship, including even kisses. It should perhaps be noted that other people were also in the car (a Haitian and two Belgian ladies) at the time. Then he asked me to contact him in a few days time to set a date for a meeting to continue our conversation.

The second meeting took place on Saturday, 29 December, and we had lunch together. Mr. Karpov again dwelt on his loneliness in Brussels and emphasized that that was the first time in his three years stay that he was eating in a restaurant. The talk lasted two-and-a-half hours and most of it was devoted to a dialogue on the problem of Russia's Jews. I shall not repeat here all Mr. Karpov's arguments and my counter-arguments, which are well known. I shall only quote what he said in conclusion:

> I must confess that I have been convinced of the justice of your case. I wish to emphasize that this is the first time that I have heard arguments about an internal problem of the Soviet Union without their being accompanied by an attack on the Soviet Union or its regime. I have been convinced, and as I do not like doing things by halves, I would like to ask you whether there is anything I can do to help in implementing the idea of the emigration of Russia's Jews to Israel. If you agree, I am prepared to send a memorandum in this spirit to my Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I replied that I did not think I could voice an opinion on this question, because it was entirely his own affair what he would write to his ministry, and I did not wish to intrude here. At the same time, I warned him against any incautious step which might cause him harm without helping the issue at stake. And I concluded: 'As we shall be seeing each other tomorrow (I was referring to the reception at the Romanian embassy), please think this matter over and inform me tomorrow of your decision, if you wish to do so.'

Even after this second talk I hesitated and ruminated for a considerable time on whether I should report to you on these conversations. It seemed that it was 'too good to be true', and the contrast between Mr. Karpov's behaviour and that of all the rest of the representatives of the people's republics whom I had met during the last few years, was so great that I did not dare to make a laughing stock of myself by reporting opinions which were perhaps entirely deceptive.

However, something else happened in the meantime which led me to report the whole affair: The reception at the Romanian embassy took place on 30 December. While I was standing there having a long talk with Mrs. Beresin, wife of the rector of Brussels University, I noticed three Russians standing in various places of the hall, not far from me, looking at me, and the feeling was that they were waiting for an opportunity to talk with me. The three gentlemen were Mr. Dmitrii Petrovich Pozhidaev, the Soviet chargé d'affaires in Belgium, who was also a first secretary; Mr. Karpov; and Mr. Aleksandr Sergeevich Anikin, another first secretary.

As soon as my talk with Mrs. Beresin ended and she moved away, Mr. Pozhidaev came up to me, clapped me on the shoulder, and nodded his head at the departing Mrs. Beresin, saying with a smile: 'What do *you* have to do with that American agent?' (Mrs. Beresin, who is from Antwerp and is Jewish, is very active, *inter alia*, in the Belgium–United States Friendship League.) Karpov and Anikin came up in the meantime, and Karpov said: 'Last night I reported to my colleagues on our talk, and just as you convinced me so I convinced them. We have decided to act in this matter.' Mr. Pozhidaev took up from here and said:

> This is a most serious problem because, as far as we are concerned, this would affect millions of the inhabitants of the Soviet Union, and for your state it could be an existential matter. Problems of this sort can not be solved overnight. The groundwork has to be laid gradually. I think that if Comrade Karpov had sent a

routine report on your talk to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Moscow, it would have been filed away and forgotten. We, on the other hand, have decided that we shall all write personal letters to our friends in Moscow.

And Karpov continued: 'Though some of our friends belong to legislative bodies, we do not intend to act immediately but to initiate a discussion with our friends by mail. We generally bring up important matters for discussion first. We have heard an opinion which appears to us reasonable; now we want to hear the opinions of our friends back there.'

So that is the story. I have been trying to find an explanation for this strange development which I have described here and which I began by calling fantastic. I must admit that I have not been able to find any reasonable explanation, but I am certain that you, with your broader perspective, could enlighten me. I assume there will be a follow-up – at their initiative – to these talks, and I shall be very grateful for your guidance.[1]

Yours,

Sh. Kaddar

397
Meeting: M. Sharett – A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Paris, 22 December 1951)

REPORT: ISA 130.13/2594/1
[Tel Aviv] 6 January 1952

The meeting took place at the Soviet embassy where Mr. V[yshinskii] was staying during the Assembly. David Hacohen, MK, came with me. Mr. V[yshinskii] was by himself.[1]

I introduced Hacohen as a member of the delegation [to the UN assembly], member of the Knesset, an old friend and a member of the party. Mr. V[yshinskii] said with a smile: 'Your party comrade, is that right?'

I began by saying that I intended – with Mr. V[yshinskii']'s permission – to raise for clarification a question which I had already discussed with him, and I hoped that this would not be taking advantage of his patience. The question was straightforward: would we be privileged to see Jews from the Soviet Union starting to come to Israel?

Doc. 396

1. Levavi replied that the Soviet approach was indeed unprecedented, especially as there were no other indications that it reflected a new mood in high circles in the USSR. He advised him, however, to follow events and to inform him of any new moves in this matter (letter of 13 Jan. 1952, filed under ISA 130.10/2533/1). There seem to have been no further developments in this matter.

Doc. 397

1. For the Soviet version of this meeting see Doc. 394.

Mr. V[yshinskii] here made a movement as if he wanted to answer the question on the spot, but seeing that I had not finished he checked himself, took a sheet of paper and pencil and started writing.

I went on, saying that the Soviet Union was the only country in the world from which Jews were not emigrating to Israel. The establishment of our state was a world Jewish undertaking, but the Jews of the Soviet Union, numbering almost two million, had no part in it. This was making us feel unhappy and depressed, and was giving us no peace. We were unable to reconcile ourselves to this situation. The revolution which brought about the creation of the Soviet Union was a titanic undertaking of liberation for the Russian people. At that time, this people made a heroic effort in order to cast off the yoke of tyranny. The Soviet Union had always adopted a policy of support for the efforts of liberation and resurgence of oppressed peoples. But the fate of the Jewish people was different from that of all the other nations in the world. All nations were settled on their own lands, their existence was well established there. It was enough for them to throw off the yoke of foreign and oppressive rule and they would be a free people. But this was not the case with the Jewish people, who were exiled from their own land and dispersed throughout the entire world. If their liberation was to be achieved, they had first to return to their homeland. This meant a tremendous effort of national will and was a fiat of Jewish history. I would use a somewhat forceful expression, but I was taking the liberty of being quite frank and the expression conveyed my thoughts exactly: We did not understand why the Soviet Union was standing in the way of Jewish history.

Mr. V[yshinskii] shook his head, gave me a stern look, interrupted me and said: 'There can be different assessments of the course of history.'

I replied that for us there could be no doubt as to which direction Jewish history was being realized at this time. This was demonstrated by incontrovertible facts. Our state was established as the result of a historical process – the return of the Jews to their homeland from all parts of the world. We had been dust scattered on the face of the earth and as a result of an effort of will we had assembled together and crystallized into a force. The Soviet Union had aided us in becoming a state. This aid would never be erased from the pages of our history. But the process of our resurgence had not been completed with the attainment of independence – this had only served as a new foundation and as a powerful lever. The ingathering of the Diaspora was now being conducted at a rate immeasurably greater than in the period before independence. It was only the Jews of the Soviet Union that had no part in it. Some time ago our minister in Moscow had the opportunity to speak with Mr. V[yshinskii] on the emigration of relatives – the question of exit permits to Israel for Jews who were citizens or residents of the Soviet Union and had relatives in Israel. Our minister also wrote on this question to Mr. V[yshinskii] after the meeting.[2] Can

2. See Doc 383.

we hope that this matter can be arranged and that at least to this degree the present complete separation will end?

Mr. V[yshinskii] commenced his reply, looking from time to time at the paper in his hand. He began with restrained anger, which burst forth in the course of his speech. I was completely wrong, he said, when I spoke of the conflict between the policy of the Soviet Union and the process of Jewish history. The things I said were absolutely untrue and the proof was that I contradicted myself when I recalled the help given by the Soviet Union to Israel's resurgence. The Soviet Union had stood at Israel's side in every difficult situation. He hoped he was wrong, but it seemed to him that Israel would be facing grave situations in the future as well and it could always depend on the help of the Soviet Union. In contrast, how was Israel behaving towards the Soviet Union? Where was our help to them? When it came to relations between states, one could not ask for help without a certain reciprocity. He would sit in the Assembly and look at us, and what did he see? It was not only that we did not extend help to the Soviet Union but we assumed an unfriendly attitude towards it. What had happened yesterday at the vote on the American allocation for financing hostile and aggressive actions against the Soviet Union and its allies?[3] This was an unheard-of, scandalous action on the part of the United States – an overt attack against the security of the Soviet Union. He knew full well that it was not easy for us to clash with the United States. We were dependent on their economic aid and he understood our situation perfectly, but could we not at least have abstained? We did not abstain but voted against. This deeply offended him and his friends. They did not care how Costa Rica or Honduras voted, but Israel? They had come to realize that we had been supporting the enemies of the Soviet Union all along.

I interrupted him by saying that he was well aware of how we voted in favour of Belorussia for Security Council membership, which brought us into conflict with the United States.

This remark caused a new eruption of rage. Did we deserve any praise for voting for Belorussia? This was no more than doing our duty – a duty to ourselves, not to the Soviet Union. This was a matter of adhering to a fundamental principle, which was also spurned by the United States. How could we rely on the friendship of such a power? It would help us as long as it could exploit us. Everything the Americans did was solely in their own interest, and if there was any change in their calculations, then these bandits would not hesitate to throttle us. And in this state of affairs we still came and requested the aid of the Soviet Union? We had no right to ask for their help. Were this an official conversation, he could have said just that he was under no obligation to explain their policy to us and if we did not understand it we could draw our own conclusions. But he was talking with me, with Sharett, whom he respected and liked, and he would therefore explain the situation to me.

---

3. See Doc. 394, n. 4.

It was true that our minister had spoken to him about the question of relatives, as I had done at our previous meeting.[4] But he had been ill and confined to his bed for six months during the previous year; he had had a heart attack, and during all that time had not dealt with any government business. Even now he had to take great care of himself. He was now in Paris, and when he returned he would deal with the matter. He supposed that those interested would be able to submit applications and each case would be dealt with on its own merits. If there were aged parents who wanted to join their children in Israel or young people whose parents were in Israel, or similar cases, there was no point in causing unnecessary suffering to people. Such allowances for the unification of families had also been permitted in the past, but I had raised a different question. This was the question of emigration (he said *emigratsiia*, and for some reason he pronounced the 'g' as 'h', as the Ukrainians do), and that was out of the question. The state system of the Soviet Union did make this possible, nor did the problem exist. The Jews in the Soviet Union breathed a different air and they could not be compared with the Jews of other countries. He himself knew many Jews. It never crossed the minds of any of them to leave the Soviet Union for Israel or any other country. At least, none of them had ever mentioned any such wish to him. And it was not surprising. The Jews in the Soviet Union enjoyed complete equality. They held important posts in all walks of life and in government service. It was enough to mention Lazar' Kaganovich,[5] one of the most popular and well-liked people in the Soviet Union.

Mr. V[yshinskii] said some more general and vague things to prove that the Jews of the Soviet Union were well off in their country and any thought of emigrating to Israel was foreign to them.

When I began my reply I first said that I deeply appreciated the personal trust he had in me which enabled him to talk with me so frankly.

He interrupted me and said that nothing could change his personal attitude towards me, and added some seemingly heartfelt words of esteem. This relaxed the tension, but he said again in the course of the conversation: 'I was somewhat agitated a few minutes ago; I am sorry about that – please forget it.'

I said I well understood his point of view and here were my comments. Naturally, by voting for Belorussia we had done our duty towards the principles we hold. Still, it was a fact that by doing so we had clashed with the United States and, in view of our total dependence on its help, which I was glad to hear he well understood, it was not a thing to be done lightly – the more so since Britain and France, though at first they voted with us for Belorussia, left us and went over to Greece. As to yesterday's vote, we would have been in a different situation if an American resolution had been put

4. See Doc. 339.
5. Politburo member and deputy prime minister of the USSR.

forward which would have confirmed their right to allot moneys for those ends. We would not have supported such a resolution. But as it was, the vote was on a Soviet resolution which contained a general and sweeping condemnation of the United States. Our support of such a resolution would have put at risk the entire web of our relations with the United States, and this we could not afford.

My answer did not exhaust the subject. Owing to the preparations for my journey I was not present at the meeting of the First Committee on the last day before the recess for the holidays when the voting took place, and therefore was not familiar with the details of the Soviet resolution. It was only after the talk that I learned that it censured and slandered the entire Mutual Security Act – which included an explicit paragraph on aid to Israel. Obviously we had no alternative but to vote against the resolution. I wrote a short personal letter to Vyshinskii in which I included this additional explanation for our voting, and incidentally thanked him for the conversation and expressed the hope that some progress would be made in the matter of relatives.[6]

I said that I did not know whether Mr. V[yshinskii] fully comprehended the extent to which our entire enterprise of establishing ourselves was dependent on American aid. We could not hope to establish ourselves economically, and therefore obtain real independence, in any other way. The resources of our country could in no way suffice to build up an economy which could absorb the seven hundred thousand who had already joined us and the hundreds of thousands still to come. We needed foreign aid just as we needed air to breathe and the only major source for aid was America – not only America's Jews but also the government of the United States. The help of America's Jews was also dependent on the goodwill of their government and on their appreciation that we were its friends. America's Jews were American patriots just as the Jews of the Soviet Union were Soviet patriots. I mentioned the example I had given to Messrs Malik and Sobolev when they had dinner with me a few days previously. A man who is prostrate and helpless on the ground and is making efforts to get up must use whatever helping hand is stretched out to him. He can not get up without help, but once he is standing he has no need to lean on anybody else.

Mr. V[yshinskii] said he understood my viewpoint but, quite frankly, did not share it. This was just a matter of personal opinion and we could talk about it not as representatives of states but as two students of the same university. His personal opinion was that the course we were following led not to independence but to economic and political subjection. There was a period in the Soviet Union when its economic situation was as bad as could be, and the only chance of recovery seemed to be to grant concessions to foreigners. The final decision was against this step. True, there was great suffering, but the country finally recovered on its own.

---

6. Sharett had appended this paragraph later in the manuscript. For the letter to Vyshinskii see Doc. 394.

I replied that unfortunately we could not learn from this experience. This was not a question of temporary suffering, not even of abandoning large numbers of people to hunger. The danger we were facing was much more serious. It touched on our physical survival as a nation, as a state. We were not an existing permanent reality, we were something new which was taking shape. If we did not create and absorb – we would fall and all the toil and all the sacrifices made to attain independence would have been in vain. From this standpoint we had nothing to lose, because if we gave up America's aid out of fear of subjection, we were lost anyway. And this was not only a question of economic aid. We needed large quantities of arms. We were surrounded on all sides by hostile nations twenty times more numerous than we. We could obtain these arms solely from the United States and its allies. It was not our fault that we had come into existence in a period of international tension and preparations for a new war on both sides. We were not the cause of it but for us it was a matter of life or death to grow strong precisely now, in the existing circumstances, which we could not change. To grow strong meant to accept aid, but this aid was only the means to the end, which was consolidating our independence. But with all our dependence on aid we were resolved not to lend a helping hand to any aggressive plot against the Soviet Union. We knew that the Soviet press was full of stories about bases we had given to the United States and on our being their tools for every evil end. All these stories were absolutely groundless.

Mr. V[yshinskii] said: 'We have never accused you of that.'

I replied that it was a fact that the Soviet press kept publishing such tales. Mr. V[yshinskii] did not respond.

I continued, saying that we were most interested in maintaining a balance in our international position, but the Soviet Union was not helping us in this. The United States held a trump card which the Soviet Union was also supposed to have, but was not using at all, and thus the United States had the upper hand. This trump card was the free contact between the Jewish Diaspora and the State of Israel. Our ties with American Jews were growing steadily stronger in a hundred different ways while there was no contact at all between us and Soviet Jewry.

Mr. V[yshinskii] reacted to that very strongly. Did I not understand that the United States was facilitating this contact solely for its own profit? American Jews coming to Israel were America's emissaries, instruments in its schemes. In the long run these assumptions would prove false, because American Jews settling in Israel would end by being Israeli and not American patriots – but that was the intention as of now.

I replied that I was not referring to American Jews settling in Israel, whose number was rather small, but to the multitude of American Jews who came to visit Israel, to the possibility we had of visiting them, and to other forms of free contacts between us.

That was another matter, said Mr. V[yshinskii], and diverted the conversation down a blind alley by giving us a detailed explanation of the Soviet tourist

system. They believed in group not private tourism – visits of organized delegations. Forty thousand people visited the Soviet Union in this way last year. It was true that the entire tourist undertaking in the Soviet Union was suffering from a lack of funds. The state was preoccupied with the work of reconstruction and there were no financial resources available to develop tourism and to set up the necessary institutions. But this would be set straight in time.

I brought the conversation back to the main subject and presented the problem of the future of Soviet Jewry. The Soviet regime had adopted a clear solution to the national problem by conferring complete autonomy on every nation within the broad framework of the Soviet Union. But this solution, appropriate to the problem of a national community concentrated in its own region, did not apply to the Jewish community which was dispersed in all parts of the union.

Mr. V[yshinskii] replied immediately: 'That is not true. We set up the Republic of Birobidzhan.'

I said that from our impression of the results of this experiment, we had reached three conclusions: first, only an insignificant minority of the Jews of the Soviet Union had settled in Birobidzhan.

Mr. V[yshinskii]: 'And whose fault is it if they find it convenient to live in Moscow?'

I confirmed that in any case the aim had not been achieved from this viewpoint. The second conclusion was that the Jews were a minority in Birobidzhan.

Mr. V[yshinskii]: 'That is not true. They are the majority. You are clearly mistaken in interpreting the names. There are many Russian-sounding names which in fact are those of Jews.'

I said that our expertise on the situation in Birobidzhan or on Soviet statistics in general hardly extended to an acquaintanceship with the names of Birobidzhan's inhabitants. I was only giving general impressions we had received from afar. And the third impression was, that the majority of Birobidzhan's Jews had settled in the cities and the attempt to transfer most of them to the countryside and to agriculture had been unsuccessful.

There was no comment on that.

I stressed again the unique character of the problem of Soviet Jewry which had no parallel among the other nations of the union, and said that we wanted very much to see Mr. Stalin in order to clarify this problem and present our viewpoint.

Mr. V[yshinskii] said: Mr. Stalin understood the matter very well.

I added that we were also aware that very many among the Jews of the Soviet Union saw themselves as an integral part of the Soviet regime and the thought of leaving the Soviet Union had never crossed their minds. However, it was possible that there were many others who would choose to go to Israel if they had the opportunity to do so.

Mr. V[yshinskii] again said that no one had expressed such a wish.

I said that there was no expression of the wish because there was no opportunity of doing so.

He said that there had been no applications for exit permits.

I said that there were no applications because there had been no decision to approve them. This was a vicious circle. If one could break it at least for the relatives and if it was published that Jews from the Soviet Union had started coming to Israel, this would be wonderful tidings indeed for Israel and for around Jewish communities around the world. Jewish public opinion would have been shown that the Soviet Union was strong enough to alter its accepted policy when it was convinced that the change was justified.

Mr. V[yshinskii] again said that each case of relatives would be dealt with on its merits.

I added that the arrival of Soviet Jews in Israel would certainly not be to the liking of the United States. We were demanding this because we needed it, and this was our position on all matters.

Mr. V[yshinskii] commented that Jewish communists had no reason to emigrate to Israel in order to be persecuted there. He understood well enough that Israel could not today be a communist country and he would not dream of demanding it of us. They were not at all interested in sending agents to us.

I told him that I had to stress, to put things straight, that communists were not persecuted in Israel although their strength was not considerable. The Communist Party was absolutely legal and there were communist members of the Knesset who could not be accused of keeping a low profile.

The conversation went round in circles and again returned to questions of development and American aid. Hacohen gave a number of salient examples of vital development enterprises in agriculture and industry whose implementation could not have been imagined without the aid of foreign capital. The discussion of emigration in principle continued indecisively.

Mr. V[yshinskii] repeated his routine arguments: No one has applied; we have no knowledge of anyone wishing to leave. He reiterated: A desire to leave the Soviet Union could not occur in the nature of things, because the Jews were integrated and rooted in Soviet life and constituted an organic part of the mosaic of society in general, 'If you came and saw it with your own eyes – you would become convinced', he said.

I said that I had actually asked for permission to go.[7]

This reply caused some embarrassment to Mr. V[yshinskii]. He must have understood that he had let slip an incautious remark, but he recovered rapidly and escaped from the trap by saying politely: 'We shall always be happy to see you.'

I said in conclusion that we were a patient but also a stubborn people and we had no intention of desisting from this theme of Soviet Jewish emigration to Israel.

The parting was friendly, and Mr. V[yshinskii] had a broad smile on his face.

7. See Doc. 323.

398
G. Rafael to the Head of the Israeli Delegation to the United Nations

COPY: ISA 130.02/2387/13
Paris, 29 January 1952

At a reception held at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs a few days ago, I had the opportunity to talk with Sobolev, the Russian ambassador to Poland, who waxed enthusiastic about the restoration of Warsaw's ruins. He told me that where the Warsaw Ghetto had stood, modern residential neighbourhoods were now being built, and very soon there would be no sign of the place having been in ruins. I replied that I had already heard from our representatives in Poland about the astonishing progress being made in this restoration, but that we should never be able to forget that they were building on the ruins of Poland's Jewry. The talk then turned to the situation of Jewish survivors in Poland. To my surprise, Sobolev told me frankly that antisemitism was still deeply rooted among the population and surfaced openly in conversations between people. He added that this was surprising, seeing that, after three million Jews had been exterminated, there were today practically no spheres of contact or friction between the Polish and Jewish populations. He thought for a moment, and then added: There are still many among the Poles who resent the extensive representation of the Jews in the government and the administration, and perhaps that is the reason for the continued existence of antisemitism in their country.

I was astonished to hear such frank and dangerous talk from a representative of the Soviet Union, the de facto ruler of Poland. True, what he said was tinged with reservation and did not give the impression that he justified the phenomenon and its cause, but the very fact of his analyzing the situation in this manner, in my opinion, portends ill to those Jews who are part of the administration.

I said I assumed that the Polish government would make every effort to uproot this malady, but Sobolev avoided giving a clear answer to that.

I used the opportunity to discuss the situation of the Jews in the Soviet Union, and remarked that the German occupation of the western part of the Soviet Union had given rise there to demonstrations of antisemitism, and that I assumed the authorities there were making efforts to uproot it. Sobolev stressed in his reply that antisemitism did not constitute a problem in the Soviet Union and that all the reports of antisemitism having taken root in the Ukraine following the German invasion were exaggerated a priori and groundless. He added that there was no country in the world in which the situation of the Jews was as secure as in the Soviet Union, and agreed – following my comment – to add Israel at least to the list of those countries which afforded sanctuary to the Jews. I emphasized that we were aware and happy that the Soviet Union did not discriminate against its Jews, but we had not become

reconciled to the fact that the Jews of the Soviet Union had been prohibited from joining us in the undertaking of our regeneration in Israel. The Soviet Union held to the principle of self-determination, and we would wish to see progress in this respect as regards the Jews of the Soviet Union. I explained to Sobolev that we needed a healthy element coming of their own free will and not as victims of persecution. To this he replied that he had not seen any signs among the Jews of the Soviet Union of a wish to leave that country. True, he had spent most of the last few years abroad and therefore could not judge what their real feelings were, but in his meetings with Jewish friends in Moscow, he had never heard them express a wish to emigrate to Israel. I pointed out that as long as the policy of the Soviet Union was not to agree to emigration, one could not expect that in the circumstances prevailing in that country Jews would openly proclaim their wish to emigrate. Sobolev accepted this assumption. When we parted, he again emphasized that he was not too well informed about the situation of the Jews in the Soviet Union, but that he was worried about that of the Jews in Poland.

When we were talking about the Warsaw Ghetto I asked him whether he had read Hershey's *The Wall* and he said he had never heard of the book. I recommended it to him, and sent him a copy several days later.

Yours,

G. Rafael

399
Sh. Eliashiv to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2507/2
Moscow, 1 February 1952
Secret

I read very carefully the text of your conversation with Vyshinskii.[1] I tried to sum up in brief the main points, as I saw them, in my telegram to you. Today I shall expand on the subject and relate it to two other matters which together form a single complex, as follows:

Our policy at the UN and its effect on Soviet Jewry. I shall start with the main point. It is of the utmost importance that you laid out the entire subject, that you presented our problem in all its aspects and that you appeared as a claimant. The problem has now been placed openly on the table. I think that our case had not previously been submitted to them so clearly, though from

1. See Doc. 397.

your previous talks with this same person, as well as from the prime minister's declarations and your speeches, and also from the memorandum I submitted at the time to Vyshinskii[2] and from our reply to their note[3] – they know well enough what our wishes are. I think it very important that in your talk you started with the main point and that there was only one impression your interlocutor could have received – that you had wanted to meet him over that particular subject and that this was the crucial issue in our relations with them. It was also important that you expressed the wish to meet Stalin, something which had never been said so far on any occasion. From the point of view of the presentation of the issue, this was therefore of first-rate significance.

But the most important thing in conversations of this sort is – what he says. And here one must say that the impression received was distressing. In my telegram I pointed out the positive points in what he said: his promise that we could depend on their support in times of stress, his understanding of our relations with the US, the distinction they make between us and other countries, their special interest in our voting ('he sits there and watches us'), the admission that they have no complaints against us in the matter of foreign bases. But, in contrast to these positive aspects is their rage at the line we have taken, which was so clearly demonstrated in his outbursts, and by the things which, according to the records, were repeated – namely, that we could not ask for their help without reciprocity, and as things stood we had no right to ask for their help. These words are very grave, and what they in effect mean is that we can not expect them to respond to our requests as long as we keep to our present policy line. Passing to what he said about immigration, you find one positive point – that there is no logic in making people, including young people, suffer for no reason. But this point pales in the face of his harsh words whose negative aspect is clear: the stubborn contention stated repeatedly, that no Jewish inhabitant of the Soviet Union wishes to leave, the hollow and grievous response regarding discussion of each individual case on its own merit. If you connect this with his previous remark that we had no right to ask for their help – you have the distressing and worrying summation of the talk.

It is quite possible that external matters and the surrounding atmosphere influenced him and induced him to say things which he would not have said under other conditions. The date set for the meeting – the day following the vote on a matter which made his blood boil – was the most unfortunate one possible. Perhaps some time later, and after other votes cast by us (and there have been such votes!), he would have spoken otherwise. I understand that you were not master of your schedule, that you were about to leave, and it was not you who set the date, and what I have said is in no way critical of where we might have erred: such criticism is fundamentally sterile and unhelpful and it is therefore useless to dwell on it. I am bringing this up with the

2. Doc. 383.
3. Doc. 387.

thought that it might be possible for us to console ourselves somewhat and say that we do not necessarily have to see this conversation in such a gloomy light, that perhaps one might hope that in fact matters are not so bad, and that we might expect different formulations and conclusions in a calmer atmosphere. One more point, also external though it could have affected the talk adversely – and here I am referring to something over which we had no control. I think that it was a mistake that you did not go by yourself. Your companion was for him someone incidental, with whom he had no previous contact and presumably would not have in the near future. Vyshinskii came by himself – which is for them unusual – that is, he was prepared for a confidential talk with you, and it is possible that the appearance of an additional person for reasons he did not understand added to his anger and supplied him with an audience for a speech. I find it difficult to imagine an outburst on his part with just the two of you sitting there by yourselves.

These are two external matters that I think should be taken into account as having adversely affected the conversation. However – the crux lies not in the external matters but in a much more profound consideration: our policy line at this [UN] Assembly. In one of my letters to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at the start of the Assembly's sessions, I wrote: 'In as far as I have followed our voting at the UN Assembly, it is apparent to me that our stand is an independent one and no fair person could say that we are anybody's satellite.'[4] To my regret, I can not say the same now. There has been a significant shift from the policy of non-alignment which we continue to advocate. I can not judge from afar whether this was indeed inevitable. I know well what the pressures on us are and I know the whole weight of that pressure from my own experience at Lake Success. But this pressure is leading us to take the easiest line of resistance, and this, too, I saw last year. I do not know whether the way we conducted ourselves resulted from a decision, following an internal struggle and that we should act thus and only thus, or whether we allowed ourselves to be pressured unilaterally without attempting to withstand it. From a distance I regretted some of our votes. I do not know, for instance, whether it might have been preferable for us to try and separate parts of the resolution on the issue of the American [act] which enraged Vyshinskii. If we seriously think there is a possibility of getting something from the Soviet Union with respect to immigration, and if what we do about the problem of Russian Jewry is not merely perfunctory – then we must take into account also the party on which it all depends.

Let us not forget that what we want is beyond the bounds of Soviet reality, it is anomalous in this cruel system of hermetically sealed borders, and we do not and will not have the slightest leverage to ask of them something which opposes their very being – if we on our part appear to them as being, all along the line, in the enemy camp. If we mean what we say about Russia's Jews, it

4. See Eliashiv to Levavi, 9 December 1951, ISA 130.11/2492/17.

is our obligation to sense also the pressure from the other side every day and every moment. I am repeating now what I said in my personal letter to you – this time only from the point of view of the good of the cause. I deeply regret that there was nobody in the delegation who experienced pressure from the other side and who would have tried to make the other members feel it as well. We could vote as we did on the issue of the Soviet Union being accused of aggression against Nationalist China. Why could we not have done it beforehand on the previous occasion, before the important meeting with Vyshinskii? And here I wish to make another point: in the end, with all their flirting with the Arabs, the Soviet Union did not act against us in this assembly either and did not vote with them when it concerned us.

And now to another matter, of no less importance to us. The way we and our policy are seen by the representatives of the Soviet Union is not the only thing we must not disregard. There is another factor – the Jews of the Soviet Union. From talks my colleagues and I held with various Jews, I have come to one clear conclusion: there is no limit to the sensitivity of Soviet Jewry regarding our policy, and to their dread lest, Heaven forbid, the State of Israel be in the camp of their country's enemies. These people are no less loyal to their country than the Jews of other countries to theirs. We heard this from various people and the reactions were different – but the bottom line is the same. Ordinary people, simple and primitive Jews, already hate us and are not ashamed to say so to our faces in their cryptic remarks. They have to remove heavy layers of resentment towards us to reach their 'grain of Jewishness' which is hiding somewhere in the depths of their souls, but they are not intelligent enough for that and they envelop themselves in their hatred. The well-educated, who have found a *modus vivendi* for themselves here, belittle us and do not want to have anything to do with us, for they see us in the other camp. As to the people on whom we pin our hopes – with them it is much more complicated. The more our state distances itself from the Soviet Union – the more their hope fades of their government permitting them at the present time to leave or to have any contact with us. Moreover, their fear of maintaining any contact with us and with our state is enhanced. They literally pray that our state not be presented here as hostile; they are apprehensive about our every move, about our votes; they suffer doubly and trebly with every unfriendly report or article about us. You can rely on me, my dear Moshe, on this point. After all we have heard here from Jews, I do not have the slightest doubt that my assessment of their mood is correct.

There is, of course, an answer to that: the Jews of the various countries are not responsible for Israel's policy, which is determined by Israel in accordance with its needs and problems. This answer would smack of dogmatism anywhere; from where I am it sounds as if it comes from another world. Here the emotional and intellectual categories are entirely different from those to which we have become accustomed elsewhere. Moreover, this answer will not stand up to the test of reality. In effect, we do not ignore the situation and

experiences of other Jewish communities when we decide on our policy. I well remember the deliberations on the Spanish issue at the last assembly,[5] when the wishes of various Jewish communities were not the least of our considerations. True, we did not decide in accordance with these wishes, but we did not ignore them. And in this assembly – what about the decision not to do anything to affront South Africa, a decision which put us in a rather awkward situation? We did not forget South African Jewry and its own interests – which are also our own and which we had to protect. Here also we have a Jewry, miserable and mute; but it is because of their situation that we must listen all the more attentively to those murmurs which somehow miraculously filter through to us. If we persist in our present conduct – we shall lose this Jewry. Parts of it – and certainly not small parts – are already lost to us. Do not take lightly what I am saying, either you or the people who determine our direction, people whom I admire. It is only lately that I read what the prime minister said about Russian Jewry at the seminar of Ihud Hakevuzot[6] at Bet Berl;[7] these words are a commitment and one should not utter them in vain. The problem is grievous and tragic and we must not bring it up from our lecterns on public occasions and then disregard it in the international arena. Allow me to express doubt as to whether, in the various decisions taken by our delegation at the UN, with all the hubbub around them and the heavy unilateral pressure, the delegation gave full consideration to this problem.

I may have overstepped the bounds in this letter, and surely an envoy should not write in such a manner to his minister. I beg your forgiveness a thousand times, but I can not speak differently about all this as I am so close to the terrible sight of a great Jewry, only part of whom is still struggling to maintain links to us, while we ourselves complicate this internal struggle and the struggle against the terrifying forces which surround it like a wall.

What is next? I have already cabled you that I want to go to Vyshinskii with some concrete material, to bring him a number of issues on which, as a start, I will request favourable decisions. I have to go away for a very short while owing to matters of health. I shall be back by the middle of February. If Vyshinskii is healthy and working and if our material is ready, I shall ask for an audience. I shall willingly and gladly receive any instructions you may send me.[8]

Yours in sincere friendship,

Sh. Eliashiv

---

5. On 4 November 1950 the UN General Assembly resolved to lift the diplomatic boycott of Spain and to allow UN member states to resume full diplomatic relation with it. Israel voted against this resolution, weighing, *inter alia*, the effect of a positive vote on its relations with the Eastern bloc (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 6, pp. 360–1 and Doc. 331 and no. 5 there).
6. The umbrella organization of kibbutzim affiliated with Mapai.
7. Main educational institution of the Mapai Party.
8. See also Doc. 403.

400
A. Gromyko to I.V. Stalin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.07, OP.25, P.15,D.183, LL.34–5
Moscow, 23 February 1952
Top Secret

To Comrade I.V. Stalin,

On 8 December 1951, Israel's minister in the USSR, Eliashiv, made a statement to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on instructions from his government, in which, together with an answer to the Soviet government's note of 21 November 1951 about the creation of the so-called Middle East Command, the Israeli government raised with the Soviet government the question of allowing Jews in the USSR to leave for Israel.[1]

The statement maintains that 'the Jews' return to their historic homeland' is a basic mission of the State of Israel and that the Israeli government's appeal 'is entirely in accord with the Soviet government's policy, which is based on national equality and the right of every people to self-determination'.

It should be noted that this is not the first time that the government of Israel has raised the issue of Jews leaving the USSR. On 22 October 1951, Israeli Minister in the USSR Eliashiv sent the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a personal note, in which, on behalf of the government of Israel, he asked permission for Soviet citizens with relatives in Israel to leave for Israel, 'in order to reunite divided Jewish families'.[2] The note expressed the hope 'that the Soviet government would take a general decision on the matter, and that, on the basis of such a decision, each individual case would be treated favourably' and that 'the procedure for granting exit permits would be made as simple and quick as possible'.

In conclusion, the note expressed the hope that the Soviet government would reach a positive decision on this question.

Apart from this official approach on the question in the statement of 8 December and the note of 22 October 1951, permission for a mass exodus of Jews from the USSR to Israel has been sounded out frequently by way of verbal inquiry in conversations with the minister of Israel to the USSR at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and also in conversations between Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs Sharett and Comrade Vyshinskii (on 21 October 1950 in New York, and on 22 December 1951 in Paris).[3]

Since the government of Israel has often and in various forms raised the question of Jews leaving the USSR for Israel, the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers it advisable to instruct USSR Minister in Israel Comrade

1. See Doc. 389 and Editorial Note, pp. 750–1.
2. Doc. 383.
3. See Docs. 339, 394.

Ershov to provide an answer on the substance of the matter to Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs Sharett. In this response Comrade Ershov must make the point that the form in which the question was raised in the government of Israel's statement of 8 December 1951 amounts to interference in the internal affairs of the USSR. He should also make clear the present procedure for all Soviet citizens wishing to leave the USSR, which is established by existing legislation.

Comrade Ershov should convey this answer to Sharett in the course of his next visit to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs on some other matter.

A draft decree of the Central Committee of the AUCP(b) is attached.[4]

Please give this due consideration.

A. Gromyko

401
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett (Tel Aviv, 24 February 1952)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.57, D.345, L.67

I called on Sharett today, 24 February, and made a statement to him about our property in Israel.[1] Sharett reacted quite hypersensitively to my statement, and when I had finished reading it, made two comments:

1) In his opinion, the legation of the USSR fails to take account of local legislation, which protects the rights of tenants.[2]

2) The government of Israel does not know whether it has the right to resolve this difficult question of the transfer of property. Some people take the view that the question of Russian property should be transferred to the judicial authorities for settlement.

Doc. 400

4. Not traced.

Doc. 401

1. On 12 February 1952, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Zorin cabled Ershov: 'Cable urgently draft of your statement to the Israeli Ministy of Foreign Affairs listing property items and to whom (the USSR legation or the representative of the Palestine Society) they should be transmitted' (AVP FR, f.059, op.28, p.31, d.165, l.36, 1.50).On 21 February 1952 Zorin instructed Ershov to visit Sharett and submit the statement (AVP FR, f.059, op.28, p.31, d.165, l.150 and see Doc. 402).
2. Sharett was referring to two matters: (a) the 'Rent Restrictions (Dwelling) Ordinanace' in force in Palestine from 1940 and valid in Israel then. The ordinance was aimed at restricting rent increase on dwellings and the eviction of tenants. It established the concept of rent control and stipulated that rent increases by the landlord should not exceed 15 per cent per annum (Gorali, *Law of Landlord and Tenant in Palestine*, pt. 1, pp. 9–44); (b) Soviet attempts undertaken in 1951 to raise rent for the court building in Jerusalem five-fold – from IL2,000 to IL10,000 per annum (Y. Rabinovich to A. Levavi, 11 Sept. 1951, ISA 130.11/2501/19).

When Sharett had finished, I told him that the property issue was absolutely clear and that the government of Israel should hand the property over to the rightful owners, that is, the legation of the USSR and the Russian Palestine Society. I rejected his statement that we were not taking account of local legislation which protects the rights of tenants, and pointed out that this legislation protects, above all, the rights of property owners. I added that handing over the question of the property to the judicial authorities would only delay its transfer. Sharett answered that there were no political reasons behind this, and that he thought that the government would make a decision in about a month's time, when he returned from his visit to Britain, where he would be travelling on 28 February. Sharett added that my statement would be duly examined and would be answered when the government had taken its decision. I referred to Sharett's previous statement and said that I expected the transfer of property in the very near future. Sharett repeated that this could not be done before his return from Britain, but he would report my statement to the government today or tomorrow. I repeated that I was insisting on a solution to this clear and uncontroversial question, that is, the transfer of the property, within the shortest possible time.[3]

Ershov

402
Statement by P.I. Ershov on Russian Property in Israel

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.88, P.57, D.345, L.67
Tel Aviv, 24 February 1952

In accordance with the approach of the USSR legation in Israel in April 1949, the Israeli authorities re-registered in the name of the USSR a number of properties which formerly belonged to the Russian imperial government and are now the property of the USSR. These re-registrations in the name of the Soviet Union included, in particular, a plot of land in Jerusalem with the buildings and premises known as the Russian Compound, and two other plots in Jerusalem in the Birket–Mamila district.[1]

So far, however, although the re-registration has been completed, the legation of the Soviet Union in Israel has not in practice been allowed to

---

Doc. 401
3. See the opinion of the attorney-general in Doc. 347.

Doc. 402
1. See Doc. 411, Appendix, point 1.

dispose of this property at its discretion. Some of the buildings belonging to the USSR, in particular, those in the quarter called the Russian Compound, are still being used by various Israeli institutions and organizations without the knowledge and agreement of the USSR legation in Israel, and without the registration of the appropriate tenancy agreements with the rightful owner of the property. In spite of all this, these Israeli institutions and organizations are still not paying the owner of the property any rent for its use.

The legation of the USSR has drawn the attention of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the abnormal situation with regard to this Soviet state property, and it insists that all Israeli institutions and organizations, and also private persons, who are in fact using various buildings which are Soviet property, be informed by the appropriate Israeli authorities that they must immediately arrange with the legation of the USSR the terms for further use of these properties.

2. As the ministry is aware, the legation of the USSR in its notes of 6 June 1950 and [9] May 1951[2] asked the government of Israel to take the necessary steps to ensure that all the remaining property which had belonged to the former Russian imperial government, and also the property registered in the name of Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich, also be re-registered as the property of the USSR and handed over to the legation of the USSR in Tel Aviv. In the same notes was a request that steps be taken to hand over the property registered in the name of the Orthodox Palestine Society to the representative of the USSR Academy of Sciences' Palestine Society, who was duly appointed by the society's council, and who arrived in Israel in April 1951.

Further, in accordance with the letter of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 19 August 1949, the Soviet legation asked for written confirmation of the appointment of the representative of the Moscow Patriarchate as head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, to which confirmation should be attached a list of the property previously transferred to the representative of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Although the legation of the USSR has frequently reminded the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, both in writing and verbally, of the need to precipitate the transfer of all this property to its rightful owners, and although the Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave repeated assurances that the matter would be settled in the near future, the Israeli authorities have still not transferred the property to the legation of the USSR and to the Academy of Sciences' Russian Palestine Society, respectively, and it is still being used illegally by various Israeli institutions, organizations and private persons.

As for the property of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission, although it was at one time in the hands of the representative of the Moscow Patriarchate, this transfer has still not been confirmed by the Israeli authorities, as was proposed

2. See Doc. 335, n. 1 and Doc. 346.

by the ministry itself in its letter of 19 August 1949 and to which the Soviet Mission agreed in its note of 6 June 1950.

Moreover, the Israeli authorities are trying to prolong their use of the property of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission. This is borne out by the fact they still have unlawful possession of one of the mission's buildings, namely, the Hasadi house with a plot of land in Jerusalem (the Selivestrov plot).[3]

The legation of the USSR considers that these actions of the Israeli authorities are unlawful and reserves the right to return to this question in the future.

In bringing the situation as described above to the notice of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the legation of the USSR insists that all property which has not been re-registered in the name of the USSR, together with the property of the Palestine Society, should, in accordance with the legation's request in its note of 6 June 1950, be handed over by the Israeli authorities, with all income derived from this property, to the legation of the USSR in Israel and to the representative of the Russian Palestine Society in Israel.[4] The legation also expects the ministry to confirm, without delay, in writing, that the representative of the Moscow Patriarchate has been appointed head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and to attach to this confirmation a list of the property already transferred to the representative of the Moscow Patriarchate.

---

3. In a letter from the East European Division to the Israeli legation in Moscow, dated 16 October 1951, the Selivestrov case is described as follows:

   The landowner, a Russian monk named Selivestrov, died years ago in Russia without heirs. The property is about 10 dunams. The custodian-general, who has the legal authority to dispose of heirless property, had allowed construction on this land. When the construction began, representatives of the Soviet legation appeared, accompanied by a lawyer, and demanded that the work be stopped, claiming that the land was Soviet property. Work was discontinued and the issue became subject to settlement. To avoid conflict, the custodian-general suggested awarding a certain sum of money to the bishop for eventual heirs, stipulating that the bishop must pledge to pass the money on to them.

   After consultations with Ershov, the bishop decided to approach the patriarch for authorization of the proposed settlement. The patriarch agreed and an appropriate court proceeding was initiated in which the bishop was awarded IL22,000. Several days later, the bishop turned to Mr. Rabinovich and asked for his intervention to cancel the settlement, saying that since the arrival of Mr. Kalugin in Israel, he had lost the authority to deal with matters of property. This authority was vested henceforth with Kalugin. His authority is unlimited. In addition to administrative and financial control over existing property, he is entitled to buy land from Arabs, Greeks, Armenians and even from Jews, at any price, at his discretion. For this purpose he had received a special dollar budget. The head of the mission was ordered henceforth to refrain from selling, leasing or using the land. In accordance with this order, the bishop was asked to return the money for the Katamon [Selivestrov] land; however, it was too late. The bishop refused to return the money, referring to the patriarch's authority (ISA 130.11/2501/19; see also Doc. 347 and n. 1 there).

4. In January 1952, Ershov pointed out in a telegram to Moscow that the Soviet Union would have to pay a huge property tax when it received the property. In a reply dated 12 February 1952, Zorin stated: 'Your telegram indicates that you confuse two separate questions: the transfer of the property and the burden of the tax. It should be clear to you that the foremost issue is the transfer of property. The question of the tax on the property may emerge after the property transfer, and you should bear in mind, that we do not intend to bear any burden, particularly since up to the present, this property was used not by us but by the Israeli authorities' (AVP RF, f.059, op.28, p.31, d.165, l.36).

The legation of the USSR considers that the Israeli authorities are responsible for the inadmissible delay in the transfer of the property to its rightful owners, and it expects the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take the necessary steps to ensure that all property belonging to the Soviet Union, the Russian Palestine Society and the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission is handed over to its rightful owners in the very near future.[5]

403
A. Levavi to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2507/2
Tel Aviv, 25 February 1952
Personal/Top Secret

I have the following reservations about the assessment of Israel's minister in the Soviet Union.[1] concerning your talk with Vyshinskii.

(a) One can hardly assume that on so very fundamental a question as that of the Jews in the Soviet Union, Vyshinskii would have said anything different from what he said if you had met him under other circumstances (not following a vote which incensed him, or his being alone with you). After all, he does not elaborate opinions of principle; he only expresses them. He certainly does not decide on a fundamental stand on the basis of a transient emotional reaction nor even on the basis of considerations of petty tactics between one vote and another.

(b) As long as Israel is outside the Soviet bloc and as long as there is sympathy for Israel among the Jews of the Soviet Union, these facts, in the context of the existing international circumstances, will arouse suspicion in the Politburo. Perhaps one of the most convincing pieces of evidence of this is the Politburo's attitude towards any hint of nationalist manifestations, whether Ukrainian, Estonian, Yakutian or whatever, which are not in accordance with the official line (not, Heaven forbid, in opposition to the official line, but are not included in the premises laid down and ratified explicitly and in detail by the Politburo). We can not therefore ascribe to shifts in Israel's foreign policy any significant influence on the Politburo's Jewish policy.

(c) I think that the summary of the various attitudes of the Jews in the Soviet Union towards Israel provided in the above-mentioned letter is biased.

Doc. 402

5. On 26 February 1952 Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Zorin summoned Israeli Chargé d'Affaires Argaman and repeated to him what had been said by Ershov to Sharett in this statement. Argaman promised to inform Tel Aviv immediately.

Doc. 403

1. See Docs. 397, 399.

I do not think that 'simple and primitive Jews' always see us through *Pravda*'s eyes. There are such cases, but these must not be considered the rule. This would be an unduly subjective and pessimistic perception. It is not only that there are many instances contradicting such an assumption. We must always remember that the circumstances of the regime leave their imprint on almost any incidental conversation which we might have in the Soviet Union, and especially in snatches of conversations. Fear and suspicion, the habit which has become an instinct but which still affects only superficial, offhand forms of expression – these, and not conviction or any inherent disposition, explain most of the occasional arguments directed against us.

Moreover, in the current period of global and Cominform policy, we are not going to get good press in the Soviet Union as long as we remain outside the Cominform's jurisdiction. There is no such country. For instance: India, Sweden, Switzerland, etc. The difference is only between more and harsher criticism or less criticism. As you know, some even argue that the very mention of Israel is positive for the Jews, even when it is being censured.

Thirdly, not a few Jews in the Soviet Union have a tendency – which is perhaps encouraged by the organized dissemination of rumours – to lay responsibility for the aggravation of the Jewish problem in the Soviet Union at the door of the Israelis (for instance: 'Golda').[2] This is a mental process which must be explained in terms of psychology and not in terms of the laws of logic which analyze reality objectively and accurately. In other words: this regrettable manifestation which drives a kind of wedge between the Jews of the Soviet Union and Israel can not be made to disappear by casting votes at the UN Assembly. Only direct contact with the Jews in the Soviet Union is likely to strengthen their link to Israel, totally nullify the influence of Soviet propaganda about Israel and mitigate the complex which drives them to seek an 'Israeli scapegoat' for the misfortunes of the Jews in the Soviet Union.

This leads us to our present policy regarding the Jews in the Soviet Union: (1) in the diplomatic field, to keep the immigration issue open; (2) to work cautiously but energetically for every sort of direct contact; (3) to bear in mind that the immigration of individuals may have a strong and desirable effect among their imprisoned brethren.

(d) As for the objective reality: about two years ago the Soviet Union exiled more than ten thousand Greek citizens from the Caucasus to Siberia.[3] There was no lack of rumours about the expulsion of Jews, as such, from various localities. As far as we know, not one of these rumours has so far been substantiated. What concerns us is that perhaps this, or something like it, could actually happen one of these days, as a result of Israeli foreign policy.

---

2. Reference is clearly to the rumours spread in the USSR and in Israel in the spring of 1949 that Golda Meyerson had been recalled to Israel because of her failure to attain the immigration of Soviet Jewry to Israel and due to the exacerbation of tensions between Israel and the USSR in the wake of her intervention on that issue (see Doc. 241).
3. Cf. Doc. 326 and n. 5 there.

A policy harmful to the Jews exists in the Soviet Union in any case, and it began to take shape even before the establishment of Israel. Could such a policy become radically harsher because of some foreign policy decision of Israel? No one can answer this question with certainty. Even Stalin himself can not lay down hard and fast rules on this now. It is, however, clear that the principal factors affecting the fate of the Jews in the Soviet Union are: developments in the international arena and developments in the Soviet Union, while shifts in Israel's foreign policy can only be of secondary importance.

A. Levavi

404
A.A. Gromyko to I.V. Stalin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.022, OP.5A, P.66, D.8, L.105
[Moscow] 8 March 1952
Top Secret

To Comrade I.V. Stalin,

Israeli Minister in the USSR Eliashiv called at the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 8 December 1951 and, following instructions from his government, made a statement in answer to the Soviet government's note to the government of Israel of 21 November 1951 about the creation of the so-called Middle East Command.[1]

The statement asserts that the State of Israel did not receive an invitation to join the Middle East Command, and, therefore, the government of Israel has not defined its opinion of this command nor taken any decision about joining it. The statement says that 'the State of Israel has not agreed and will not agree to cooperate with aggressive actions or preparations directed against the Soviet Union'.

The statement also repeats the contention of the governments of the US, Britain, France and Turkey that the Middle East Command is not pursuing any aggressive aims and further tries to represent the creation of this command as a measure taken in order to remove the Arab countries' threat to Israel, while ensuring Israel's security and supporting peace in the Near and Middle East.

In addition, in this note the government of Israel draws the attention of the Soviet government to the supposed fact that the Soviet press publishes allegedly unfounded reports on the existence of foreign military bases in Israel. The statement also raises with the Soviet government the question of permission for Jews to emigrate from the USSR to Israel.

---

1. See Docs. 390, 391 and 392.

The USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers it necessary to instruct USSR Minister in Israel Comrade Ershov to pay a call on Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs Sharett, and, with reference to the said statement by the government of Israel, to once again draw his attention to the aggressive nature of plans to create a Middle East Command. He should make the point that these plans are intended to draw the countries of the Near and Middle East into the military schemes of the organizers of the Atlantic bloc, which are directed against the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies and towards preparations for a third world war. Comrade Ershov should also point out that the government of Israel's position, as set out in its statement of 8 December 1951, amounts to approval of the proposal for creating a Middle East Command and contradicts the assertion in the government statements that the State of Israel has not agreed and will not agree to cooperate with aggressive actions or preparations directed against the USSR.

In conclusion, Comrade Ershov should say that the Soviet government confirms its opinion, as elaborated in its note of 21 November 1951,[2] about the so-called Middle East Command.

Comrade Ershov should leave the text of the statement with the minister.

As for permission for Jews to leave the USSR for Israel, the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs will make a specific proposal to the Central Committee of the AUCP(b).

A draft decree and a draft directive to Comrade Ershov, amended according to the instructions given at the session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) of 23 January, are attached.[3]

Please give this due consideration.[4]

A. Gromyko

2. Doc. 387.
3. Not traced.
4. A handwritten remark at the top of the document reads: 'Comrade Gromyko, I am submitting a revised draft, V. Zorin, 8.3.' On 11 March 1952 Gromyko forwarded this draft to Molotov (AVP RF, f.022, op.5A, p.66, d.8, l.104).

405
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.57, D.345, LL.102–3
Tel Aviv, 21 March 1952

Speaking at a press conference of 52 representatives of American provincial newspapers visiting Israel, Prime Minister Ben-Gurion made a new anti-Soviet statement. He expressed the hope that 'among the Jews who will come to Israel in the future, there will also be Jews from the Soviet Union'. He went on:

> We have approached the USSR on this question, but have received no answer. We have no accurate information about the situation of the Jews in the USSR because even our legation in Moscow can get information only from the newspapers. But one thing is clear: the Jewish minority in the USSR does not enjoy even those rights which are extended to other minorities, and Jews can not live as Jews. We know of the disappearance of Jewish writers who were striving for Jewish education in Russia, but the authorities oppose it.

On the basis of this statement, the entire Israeli reactionary press is again raising the so-called 'Jewish question' in the USSR and is using it for new anti-Soviet outbursts.

Ershov

406
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/6
Moscow, 25 March 1952

(a) Bazarov summoned us yesterday and informed us verbally as follows: The government of Israel has raised the question of German restitution of, and reparations for, property to Israel.[1] In the opinion of the government of the Soviet Union, this is one of the questions which can be discussed at the signing of the peace treaty with Germany. End of statement. When we asked what the position of the Soviet Union was in principle and to what extent it would

1. On 23 October 1951 Eliashiv asked the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a reply to the Israeli notes of 16 January and 12 March 1951 regarding East German restitution of Jewish property expropriated by the Nazi regime. On 13 March 1952 the ministry applied to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party with a draft reply to the Israeli legation in Moscow. On 24 March 1952 the highest party body authorized a statement to be read out orally to the Israeli legation in Moscow (N. Gribanov to A. Vyshinskii, 12 Sept. 1952; AVP RF f.089, op.5, p.12, d.20, l.3). On the same day, Bazarov invited Eliashiv and read him the statement.

support us, he said that he was unable to reply and that his instructions were only to transmit the above statement. He added that the problem had to be solved by Germany itself.

(b) The implication of this announcement could be that the Soviet Union will not recognize our agreement with Bonn as long as there is no uniform peace treaty; and it may also be routine propaganda intended to gain the sympathy of various countries for their stand on the question of peace with Germany. Might it perhaps be worthwhile to tell the Soviet Union here, or at least note in the press, that they did not wait for a peace treaty and took generous reparations for themselves?[2]

Eliashiv

407
B.F. Podtserob to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.022, OP.5A, P.66, D.9, L.131
Moscow, 6 April 1952
Top Secret

To Comrade A.Ia. Vyshinskii,

As you instructed, I am presenting herewith a draft note to Comrade Molotov about the emigration of Jewish citizens of the USSR for permanent residence in Israel.[1]

B. Podtserob

Doc. 406

2. On 1 October 1952, at the opening of the Chinese cultural exhibition in Moscow, Eliashiv met the ambassador of the German Democratic Republic, Rudolf Appelt, and inquired about the East German attitude towards restitution (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel,* Vol. 7, pp. 542–3, 549). On 3 October 1952 Appelt informed the director of the Third European Department in the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, M. Gribanov, of Eliashiv's inquiry and asked for advice. Gribanov mentioned the Soviet oral statement of 24 March 1952 and Appelt wanted to see the text. On the following day Gribanov sent it to Appelt and the latter included the Soviet statement in his report to his superiors in Berlin on 15 October 1952. On 4 November 1952 Berlin cabled Appelt the East German reply to Eliashiv which was prepared by GDR Foreign Minister Georg Dertinger and approved by Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl. The East German text followed the Soviet oral statement of 24 March 1952. Timm, *Hammer, Zirkel, David Stern,* pp. 468–9.

Doc. 407

1. Reference is apparently to the AUCP(b) Central Committee decision taken sometime in March 1952 which may have been related to the memorandum on Jewish emigration to Israel submitted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (attached to this document). On the previous drafts of the memorandum, see Doc. 383, Editorial Note, pp. 750–1 and Doc. 400.

MEMORANDUM ON JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM THE USSR TO ISRAEL

To Comrade V.M. Molotov,

On the emigration of citizens of the USSR for permanent residence in Israel.

In accordance with the instructions not to obstruct the emigration of Jewish citizens of the USSR to Israel, I have to report as follows:

1. According to data from the Chief Administration of the Militia, in 1952 the militia received six applications for permission to emigrate to Israel. Decisions on these applications have not yet been adopted. The files are being prepared by the Chief Administration of the Militia for referral to the Central Committee of the AUCP(b) Commission on Departures.[2]

The data for earlier years are as follows:

1948 – 6 applications, 2 granted.

1949 – 20 applications, 4 granted.

1950 – 25 applications, none granted.

1951 – 14 applications, 4 granted.

2. Examination of the files of citizens who have applied this year for permission to emigrate for permanent residence in Israel has shown that these requests can be granted.

All six who have applied for permission to emigrate to Israel are Jews aged 52–77 years. They are asking for permission to join their children, who are in Israel and are ready to receive and support their parents (memorandum attached).

The USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers that the USSR Ministry of State Security (Comrade Ignat'ev), the Chief Administration of the Militia (Comrade Leont'ev) and the Commission on Departures of the Central Committee of the AUCP(b) (Comrade Savchenko) should be instructed to allow the persons concerned to leave the USSR for permanent residence in Israel.

3. As regards the applications of Jews to leave for Israel submitted in 1951, on which negative decisions were taken, I consider it advisable to instruct the Commission on Departures of the Central Committee of the AUCP(b) to reconsider these applications and, unless there are any special impediments, to permit them to leave for Israel.

4. A similar instruction should be given to the USSR Ministry of State Security, the Chief Administration of the Militia and the Commission on Departures with regard to possible future applications by persons of Jewish nationality who wish to leave the USSR for Israel.

Please give due consideration.

---

2. The organ within the Central Committee apparatus entrusted with screening candidates for long-term residence outside the Soviet Union.

MEMORANDUM

On Persons Who Have Submitted Requests to Leave the USSR for Israel to the Visa and Registration Department of the Chief Administration of the Militia of the Ministry of State Security
(In the Files Submitted by Comrade A.M. Leont'ev on 1 April 1952)

1. BUKHGAL'TER, Abram Isaakovich, b. 1888. Jew, born in Radzin, in Lublin Oblast, Poland. Now living in Vilnius. From 1918 to 1940 was a Lithuanian citizen. Since 1940, a Soviet citizen. Not a party member. From 1900 to 1906 was educated in a Jewish religious seminary. From 1906 to 1920 was supported by his first wife, who worked as a dressmaker. From 1920 to 1934 ran a small business (nature of business not stated). From 1934 to June 1941 lived in Kaunas, studied Talmud, lived off the Jewish community fund. In 1941 was evacuated to Syzran', in Kuibyshev Oblast. Until 1946 worked loading freight at the Khimplastmass factory and as a guard at the factory's office on the Moscow–Kuibyshev railway.

Since July 1946, he has been living in Vilnius. He does not work, but lives off remittances from his children in Israel. In 1936 his son Shalom Abramovich (b. 1915) and daughter Shtern, Frida Abramovna, b. 1910, were sent by the Jewish emigration organization to Palestine. They are at present living in Netanya, Israel. The son is employed in agriculture, the daughter is maintained by her husband, who works as a plasterer in the building trade.

His wife, Khaya Lipovna Bukhgal'ter, b. 1900, was born in Vinnitsa Oblast, the Ukrainian SSR. Jew. Education – four years of primary school. Soviet citizen. Married E.L. Nukhimovskii in 1917 and was supported by him in Vinnitsa Oblast until 1929. From 1929 to 1941 worked as a skilled labourer in a hat factory in Odessa. Evacuated from August 1941 to 1945. Worked in Rostov Oblast on a collective farm; was without work in Ural'sk and worked as a nurse in a hospital in Tashkent Oblast. Since 1945 has lived in Vilnius. In 1946 married Abram Isaakovich Bukhgal'ter.

On 3 March 1952, the Bukhgal'ter couple applied for permission to leave the USSR for permanent residence in Israel, to join their son Shalom Abramovich Bukhgal'ter from whom they have an invitation, received by Abram Isaakovich Bukhgal'ter through the Israeli legation.

A.I. Bukhgal'ter has no relatives in the Soviet Union. His wife Kh.L. Bukhgal'ter has a son, Lev Efimovich Nukhimovskii, living in the Soviet Union. He was born in 1918, works as a doctor in the Soviet army, and lives in Military Unit No. 131/68, Bukhta Ol'gi, Vladivostok. Her daughter, Mariia Efimovna Nukhimovskaia, born 1920, works as a doctor in Vilnius. Her daughter, Rakhil'-Tunia Efimovna, born in 1927, is a first-year student at the Medical Institute in Kaunas.

The file on the Bukhgal'ter couple's application has not been considered by the Visa and Registration Department of the Chief Administration of the Militia, Ministry of State Security, USSR.

It is advisable to allow them to leave the USSR.

2. Faliks, Zel'man Nusimovich, b. 1883 in the village of Kassovka, Soroki Raion, Moldavian SSR. Jewish. Soviet citizen since 1940. Primary education only. From 1899 to 1903 worked as a clerk on the railway. From 1903 to [1905] served in the Russian army. Took part in the Russo–Japanese war. From 1905 to 1914 worked as a clerk and shop assistant at Rogozheny station in the Moldavian SSR. From 1918 to 1920 unemployed. From 1921 to 1940 worked as a teller in the Uniuni Romyny Bank [*sic*] and worked at a mill and at a creamery in the town of Bel'tsy. From 1940 to 1941 worked as a secretary at the malaria health centre in Bel'tsy. From 1941 to 1945 evacuated to the northern Caucasus; worked at a creamery. Worked on a collective farm in South Kazakhstan Oblast. Since 1945 has been living in Bel'tsy in the Moldavian SSR.

His wife Esther Aronovna Faliks, b. 1883 in the village of Kapresht, Soroki Raion, Moldavian SSR. Jew. Soviet citizen since 1940. Illiterate. From 1899 to 1905 worked as an apprentice dressmaker at her place of birth. From 1906 to the present supported by her husband.

The Faliks' have a son, Khazkel Zel'manovich, b. 1911 in Chernovtsy. Works as an accountant in the Transcarpathian [state] lumber enterprise.

Their four daughters live in Israel: Leah (Faliks) Kolker, b. 1907, emigrated to Palestine in 1931. Now lives in Haifa. Works as an accountant. Tuzha (Faliks) Fel'dman, b. 1908, left for Palestine in 1933. Now lives in Tel Aviv. Does not work. Ida (Faliks) Koppel, b. 1917, left for Palestine in 1936. Now lives in Tel Aviv. Works as a nurse. Bronya (Faliks) Zil'bershtein, b. 1921, moved to Palestine in 1938. Now lives in the settlement Degania Bet. Works as a nurse.

In March 1952, the Faliks couple applied for permission to leave for permanent residence with their daughters in Israel. The daughters' invitation was received through the Israeli legation in Moscow.

The file on the Faliks couple was not reviewed at the Visa and Registration Department of the Chief Administration of the Militia at the Ministry of State Security.

Advisable to grant permission to emigrate from the USSR.

3. Kaushanskaia, Zlota Moiseevna, b. 1884, in the village Oloneshty, Moldavian SSR. Jew. Soviet citizen since 1940. Widow. Primary education. From 1894 to 1913 worked at home. From 1913 to 1927 supported by her husband. From 1927 (after her husband died), was maintained by her sons. From 1936 to 1941 was employed. From 1941 to 1945 evacuated. Worked on a collective farm in Stalingrad Oblast tending calves. In Saratov Oblast worked guarding the machine and tractor station. Did not work from 1945 to 1947. In 1947 and 1948 worked in the '30 Years of October' cooperative in Kishinev, dismissed for reasons of health. From 1948 to the present works as housekeeper in the house of Izrail' Solomonovich Bukhner. Kaushanskaia has no relatives in the Soviet Union.

Her two sons live in Israel: Barukh Itskovich Kaushanskii, b. 1916, emigrated to Palestine in 1936. Worker. Lives in Pardes Hanna, near Haifa. Also Abram

Itskovich Kaushanskii, b. 1918. Worker. Lives in Tivon, near Haifa. Both are Israeli citizens. The sons undertake to maintain their mother at their expense. Invitation received through the Israel legation in Moscow.

In February 1952, Kaushanskaia applied for permission to emigrate to join her sons in Israel permanently.

The file was not reviewed at the Visa and Registration Department of the Chief Administration of the Militia in the Ministry of State Security.

Advisable to grant permission to emigrate from the USSR.

4. Gorenshtein, Khaim-Leib Gershkovich, b. 1875 in Bendery in the Moldavian SSR. Jew. Soviet citizen since 1940. Widower. Primary education. Lives in Chernovtsy. From 1888 to 1937 worked as a painter in Bendery, Kishinev and Reni. From 1937 to 1941 watchman at the shop and cooperative of the war invalids in Bendery. From 1941 to 1946 was evacuated. In Krasnodar Krai and in the Kazakh SSR worked as a watchman. From 1946 to 1950 worked in the postal service in Chernovtsy and as a watchman for private apartments. Has not worked since 1950. Gorenshtein has no relatives in the Soviet Union.

His daughter, Ida Khaim-Leibovna Drubetskaia lives in Israel, born 1904. Works in an office. Lives in Tel Aviv. Israeli citizen. Her husband is Zema Leibovich Drubetskoi, b. 1893. Dental technician. Israeli citizen.

In January 1952 Gorenshtein applied for permission to join his daughter for permanent residence in Israel. The daughter's invitation was received through the Israeli legation in Moscow in 1951.

The file on Gorenshtein's application was not reviewed at the Visa and Registration Department of the Chief Administration of the Militia, Ministry of State Security, USSR.

Advisable to grant permission to emigrate from the USSR.

Head of the Consular Division
A. Vlasov
Deputy Director of the Near and Middle East Department
A. Shchiborin

408
V.A. Zorin to P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.31, D.165, L.95
Moscow, 19 April 1952

When he spoke to you on 24 February about transferring the property to us, Sharett stated that the government of Israel would take a decision on this question within a month after his return from Britain.[1]

1. See Doc. 401.

According to our information, Sharett returned to Tel Aviv on 31 March.

You must pay a call on Sharett, refer to your conversation with him on 24 February and his promises, point to the continuing cases of arbitrary behaviour with respect to Soviet property (e.g., attempts at unauthorized occupation of premises in the Veniaminovskoe Hospice)[2] and ask him again to hasten the transfer of all Soviet property to its rightful owners, namely the legation of the USSR, the representative of the Russian Palestine Society and the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission.

Report results by telegram.[3]

409
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.57, D.345, L.151
Tel Aviv, 24 April 1952

I called on Sharett on 23 April and, referring to his promises given in our conversation of 24 February,[1] pointed out the continuing delay in handing over Soviet property to its rightful owners, and to the fact of the unauthorized occupation of rooms in the Veniaminovskoe Hospice. Sharett interrupted me and said that the preparations for a government decision on this matter had been completed, and that he presumed that the government would adopt a decision when it met on 27 April, or, at the latest, at the first meeting after the celebration of Independence Day. I answered that I took note of his statement and asked him to instruct the authorities concerned to hand over the property immediately after the government decision. Sharett said that the USSR legation would be apprised of the government's decision in due course.[2]

Sharett went on to say that he would utilize the occasion to let me know that the Israeli government did not agree with the Soviet government's reply on the subject of German restitution of Jewish property and reparations.[3] As recommended by the occupying powers, the government of West Germany recognizes, and in most cases responds positively to, the claims of private persons and Jewish organizations to property confiscated by the Nazis or

---

Doc. 408

2. The Soviet legation mentioned this case in its note dated 18 July 1952. The reply by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dated 11 August 1952, stated that the Veniaminovskoe Hospice had been placed in the keeping of the custodian-general in view of the court decision regarding the property registered to the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society and Grand Duke Sergei (see Doc. 443, n. 4).
3. See Doc. 409.

Doc. 409

1. See Doc. 408.
2. See Doc. 411.
3. See Doc. 406.

remaining in Germany. The government of East Germany at first took the same stand but then stopped receiving and satisfying these claims. As recommended by the occupying powers, Adenauer made an official declaration and appeal to the Israeli government about reparations, which allowed the representatives of Israel and of Jewish organizations to commence negotiations with a delegation of the Bonn government.[4] There have been no declarations from East Germany, and the government of Israel is unable on moral grounds to make a direct approach to the Germans of East Germany. The government of Israel hopes that the Soviet government will reconsider its position, and will make recommendations to the government of East Germany.

Sharett asked me to convey his statement to the Soviet government. I promised to do so.

Ershov

410
A. Levavi to Z. Argaman (Moscow)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2492/17
Tel Aviv, 27 April 1952

My dear Argaman,

I shall begin with matters connected with Ershov's last visit to the minister.[1] The conversation had two parts. The first part ended, as related by telegram, with the promise that Ershov would be informed by Independence Day of the position of the government of Israel on Soviet property claims. As you are well versed on the earlier stages of this affair I shall merely enclose in this letter a copy of the Israeli reply on the matter. The Soviet Union will presumably not welcome our stand and will certainly try to protest it. However, it seems to me that our position is reasonable and correct and that we made such far-reaching concessions at the time that we can not add to them now.

In the second part of the conversation, the minister dwelt on the Soviet reply to our request for their help in obtaining reparations from East Germany

---

Doc. 409

4. This statement, delivered at the Bundestag on 27 September 1951, conceded that 'unspeakable crimes' had been committed in the name of the German people, which called for 'moral and material indemnity', [and therefore] the Federal Republic of Germany was prepared, jointly with representatives of Jewry and the State of Israel 'to bring about a solution to the question of material indemnity' (*Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel,* Vol. 6, p. 666). Adenauer's statement paved the way for the Israeli–German reparations talks.

Doc. 410

1. See Doc. 409.

(Eliashiv's telegram of 25.3.52).[2] We were very surprised when Ershov tried to claim that the Soviet Union had also not received any reparations from East Germany, apart from 'the spoils of war'. I immediately reminded him of the exchange of telegrams between Stalin and Grotewohl, and he tried to claim that there had been no such correspondence. I therefore sent him, within 48 hours, a short letter, enclosing the text of Stalin's telegram to Grotewohl (copies enclosed).[3] As to the second Soviet argument that this was a matter between Israel and Germany, which Ershov tried to emphasize, saying that Israel had not approached East Germany directly, the minister pointed out that in East Germany there had never been any development analogous to Adenauer's declaration in the Bundestag and his letter to Goldmann.[4] It was this declaration and letter which had opened the way to the negotiations at The Hague. Moreover, the government of East Germany took up such a negative position on restitution that there was no point in approaching it as long as it did not radically change its line. I am enclosing a draft of Israel's note in reply to Bazarov's announcement of 24 March 1952;[5] this draft sums up the argument which took place at the meeting with Ershov, though most of it was drafted before the meeting. We hold to our demand that the Soviet Union use its influence to induce the government of East Germany to adopt in practice and in public a positive attitude on the question of restitution to its Jews and reparations to the Jewish people. Please note that it has not yet been decided to submit this note and that the draft has not yet been ratified. I suggest that you let us know by telegram whether to submit this note in Moscow or to make do with a talk at the Soviet Foreign Ministry. It will of course also be possible to coordinate by cable slight changes in the draft. Personally, I am in favour of submitting the note in writing.

During the second part of the meeting Ershov made a number of notes, as if he wanted to understand our position. It is hard to say whether to attribute any importance to this. In my opinion – no.

[...][6]

2. Doc. 406.
3. Enclosures not on file. In a letter dated 11 May 1951, Prime Minister Grotewohl requested that the Soviet government agree to reduce the amount of reparations paid by the German Democratic Republic to the Soviet Union. On 15 May 1951, Stalin notified Grotewohl that the sum of reparations had been cut to 50 per cent, i.e., $3,171,000,000 which was to be paid in kind with German merchandise until 1965 (*Pravda*, 16 May 1951).
4. In this letter, dated 6 December 1951, Adenauer informed Nahum Goldmann of German readiness to enter into negotiations on reparations (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 6, No. 515, pp. 849–50).
5. Note not on file, but it is presumably an earlier draft of the note delivered by the Israeli legation in the USSR on 15 September (Doc. 427; see also Doc. 419).
6. The remainder of the letter, dealing with personal and administrative matters, has been omitted.

411
Meeting: P.I. Ershov – M. Sharett (Tel Aviv, 29 April 1952)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.5, P.1, D.7, L.70
Secret

I called on Sharett at his invitation. Sharett said that the government of Israel had taken a decision about the Soviet property, and that he had the honour to hand me a note in which the substance of this decision was set out.[1]

After reading the text of the note, I told Sharett that its content contradicted the assurances which had been given earlier by the former director of the East European Division, and personally by the minister of foreign affairs and that it also contradicted the note of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel of August 1949.[2] I added that the position of the government of Israel on the transfer of the property was strange and inconsistent. (A copy of the note is attached.)

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

[APPENDIX]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel pays its respects to the legation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in Israel, and in response to the statement by the minister extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the USSR in Israel to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel on 24 February 1952,[3] has the honour to make the following statement:

1. The property which was registered in the Land Registry books in the name of the former Russian Imperial Government has been re-registered by means of an appropriate correction of the records in the name of the government of the USSR, wherever entries dealing with individual pieces of property were found in the Land Registry books. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had the honour to notify the legation of this in its note of 29 May 1949 and to send the legation the relevant extracts from the Land Registry books. The legation is responsible for all pieces of this property and has full ownership rights to the property within the limits of Israeli law, including the laws protecting tenants and limiting the rent to be charged for living quarters.

2. Of the buildings listed in the supplementary list in the note of the USSR legation in Israel, No. 102 of 7 June 1949, there are two which it proved impossible to re-register in the name of the government of the USSR because one of them, namely, the plot of land with buildings at the Damascus Gate, is situated

1. See Doc. 409.
2. Reference is to the Israeli note of 19 August 1949 (see Doc. 346, n. 2).
3. Doc. 402.

on territory outside Israeli jurisdiction, while the other – the land in Ein-Karem – could not be found in the Land Registry books. To settle the matter of this property, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs advises the legation to complete the legal document mentioned in point 2 of the note of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 7 July 1949.[4]

3. The property of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission comes under the authority of the head of the mission appointed by the Moscow Patriarchate. If the head of the mission has any doubt about the ownership of any building, he can at any time request extracts from the register in the Land Registry books.

4. As regards the transfer to the Academy of Sciences' Russian Palestine Society of property registered in the Land Registry books as belonging to the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the honour to inform the legation of the USSR in Israel of the decision by the government of Israel, namely, that such transfer is conditional upon the receipt of a preliminary ruling by the appropriate Israeli court on the legal succession of these two societies.

5. The above statements are also applicable to the property registered in the name of former Grand Duke Sergei. In order to correct the Land Registry books, so as to re-register this property in the name of the government of the USSR, it is necessary to prove in the appropriate Israeli court that the property was in essence government property.

6. As for the Selivestrov plot, this was never entered in the Land Registry books in the name of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and is private property. This plot of land was handed over to the custodian-general of Israel on the basis of a judicial decision by the District Court in Jerusalem in May 1951 (civil file no. 164/41, 16/51), and a sum of money to compensate the heirs, should any appear, was deposited with authorized persons.[5]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs takes this opportunity again to express its deepest respects to the legation in Israel.

---

4. For a review of the notes exchanged between the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Soviet legation in Israel on 29 May 1949, 7 June 1949 and 7 July 1949, see the internal memorandum in Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Israel–USSR Negotiations before 19 August 1949', ISA 130.11/2501/19.
5. See Doc. 402, n. 3.

412
USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Israeli Legation in Moscow

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.5, P.4, D.18, L.3
Moscow, 10 May 1952

In response to the legation of the State of Israel's note No. 82/177 of 23 April 1952,[1] the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics respectfully replies that the Academy of Sciences of the USSR naturally can not participate in the international conference on desert research because the invitation to the conference was received just a few days before the conference opened.

413
Excerpt from the Political Report of the USSR Legation in Israel

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.5, P.12, D.9, LL.248–51
Moscow, 12 May 1952

[...][1]

V. Conclusion
For Israel 1951 was thus the year when it lost its independence both economically and in domestic and foreign policy.

The Israeli government's economic policy, based on receiving American loans and capital investments, is leading the country to catastrophe. The ruling circles see the way out in an American occupation of Israel, which they think will lead to the development of industry and agriculture and will thus increase the profits of the Jewish bourgeoisie. US interference and control of the Israeli economy give it a military character with the future aim of servicing American troops in the Middle East. Domestically, Israel is suffering increased class differentiation: on the one hand, the concentration of reactionary forces round the General Zionists (the party of the wealthy bourgeoisie), which already claims power in the state, and on the other, the gradual strengthening of the

---

Doc. 412
1. This note not traced, but see Doc. 393. On 30 January 1952, the director general of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Uri Radai, visited Soviet Minister Ershov in Tel Aviv and extended to the Soviet Union an invitation to participate in the forthcoming exhibition on developing desert areas and an international conference on desert research. On the following day Ershov telegraphed this invitation to Moscow (AVP RF, f.059, op.28, p.57, d.345, l.32).

Doc. 413
1. The excerpt comprises the last three pages of a 240-page document.

democratic camp, grouped around the Communist Party and the left wing of Mapam. The class-consciousness of the Jewish workers is growing, and they have begun to stand up to the Jewish national bourgeoisie. This is confirmed by the strikes and demonstrations – large by Israeli standards – of 1951. However, the strengthening of the democratic camp is hindered by the ideological influence of the bourgeoisie, expressed in the form of Zionism, on significant strata of the population. We must expect in the future the further strengthening of reaction and the transformation of Israel into a police state.

Israel's foreign policy serves the US State Department and is dictated by the United States. The ruling circles are ready for Israel to join the aggressive, anti-Soviet Middle East bloc, which is now being created, or to perform tasks for the United States on the basis of separate secret agreements without formal participation in the bloc.

The plans of the American warmongers and their Israeli accomplices to turn Israel into a military bridgehead for an attack on the USSR are encountering increasing resistance from the supporters of peace and friends of the Soviet Union in Israel.

In 1951 the Israeli government's attitude to the Soviet Union became more hostile. This was expressed in a number of anti-Soviet speeches by members of the government, in a systematic anti-Soviet campaign in the reactionary Israeli press, in the refusal to satisfy the legitimate demands of the USSR for the transfer of property, and in restrictions on the distribution of Soviet literature in Israel. The hostility of the Israeli government to the USSR will increase in future, and it is even possible that the Israelis will enter into a political conflict with us using Jewish emigration from the USSR to Israel as a pretext.

Drawing conclusions from the above, we should take into account the following factors in our attitude to Israel:

1) We should cease to give any political support to Israel in matters under consideration by the UN and its organs.

2) We should stop the immigration of Jews to Israel from the People's Democracies since this immigration strengthens the country's potential.

3) We should resume the publication of material in the Soviet press and the People's Democracies unmasking domestic and pro-American foreign policies of the Israeli government which run counter to the interests of the people.

4) We should give active help to the progressive forces in the country and expand the dissemination of truthful information about the USSR.

5) We should intensify our demands for the transfer of Soviet property to its rightful owners, and should exert a certain amount of pressure on the Israeli government in this matter.

6) We should increase the legation staff, including technicians, with qualified personnel, taking into account Israel's specific features. The addition of two or three diplomats from the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs would allow us to expand greatly the informational work of the USSR legation in Israel.

Minister of the USSR in Israel
P. Ershov

414
A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.57, D.345, LL.256–61
Tel Aviv, 13 June 1952

At the last meeting of the [Knesset] Committee on Foreign Affairs [and Security], Eliashiv, the Israeli minister in Moscow, answered questions from members of the Knesset.[1] Eliashiv said that members of the diplomatic corps in the USSR do not enjoy the same generous opportunities to study the country as they do in other countries, where diplomats have ample contact with public circles and individuals. In Moscow, as a rule, it is suggested to foreign diplomats that in cultural relations they make their contacts through VOKS. As for political matters, even quite insignificant ones, they are invariably met with a recommendation to approach the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At one time, he said, the legation had published its own bulletin and sent it to individuals. But now it was recommended that they distribute it through the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They are now compelled to distribute some of their publications through other diplomatic missions and to send a certain number to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They do not know whether the bulletin reaches the people for whom it is intended.

Responding to a question about the standard of living in the USSR, Eliashiv said that he had been in Moscow three years ago and noted a great improvement in the diet of the population of the USSR. The shops, restaurants and markets had enough goods and food products, but the products were still expensive. A worker spent almost all his wages on food. Eliashiv added that even the low-income groups among the population could eat well. Foreigners all noticed that Muscovites had begun to dress well, but the housing situation in Moscow was very bad, in spite of the constant increase in building. The Soviet people did not have the opportunity to compare their living standard with that of the West. They compared it with their own recent past, and this gave them strength and encouraged them to enjoy the conditions of life in the USSR. Eliashiv dwelt in particular on the development and spread of television, which had become widely available among the population. He had been told that other towns of the Soviet Union were just as well off as Moscow regarding food, without Moscow's housing shortage.

The legation was rarely visited by locals.[2] During his posting, two people had visited the legation: one of them asked for advice on divorcing his wife, who was living in Israel, while the other wanted to go to Israel.

1. The meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee took place on 10 June 1952 (see Committee Minutes, in ISA 60/7563a).
2. Compare the committee minutes: 'In reply to the chairman's second question — how the fact of the presence of two million Jews in Russia is reflected in the legation's work — we have no social contact with the Jews. The Jewish public does not visit the legation. During the time I have been there I have seen only two [Jewish] visitors' (Minutes, ISA 60/7563a, p.7).

Eliashiv placed special emphasis on the legation's lack of contact with the Jews of the USSR. To a question about the fate of Zionists arrested after the war,[3] Eliashiv answered that he knew nothing, pointing out that there were special features which had to be taken into account in the USSR: whereas in the People's Democracies, for instance in Czechoslovakia, Zionist organizations still existed, in the USSR they had been liquidated, and appropriate conditions for their existence were lacking. Referring to his conversations with Comrades Vyshinskii, Gromyko and Zorin, and to Vyshinskii's conversation with Sharett about the immigration of Jews to Israel from the Soviet Union, Eliashiv said that the authorities in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had led him to understand that there was no resistance to individuals' leaving for Israel.[4] However, there had been no answer to the legation's note on this subject.[5] In the near future, Eliashiv intends to give the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs a specific list of those wishing to leave for Israel.[6]

When asked what the connection was between Israel's note of reply concerning the Middle East Command and the issue of arrival of Jews from the USSR, [7] Eliashiv said that this section of the note had been poorly received by Zorin. In effect, Zorin had not thought it necessary to answer this question. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs should not have raised the question of Jewish immigration in this note. In Eliashiv's view, the references in this note to criticism of Israel in the Soviet press and to Soviet disloyalty towards Israel had been ill-conceived. Eliashiv said that the Israeli press campaign about the emigration of Jews from the USSR would not bring any great advantage and might even do harm.

In answer to this remark, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs and [Security] Committee Ar[gov] stood up and said that he took exception to the statements of his party comrade.[8]

---

3. Eliashiv was also asked by the chairman, Z. Aranne, about the fate of Zionists arrested by the Soviet authorities prior to World War II.
4. Compare the committee minutes: 'With regard to the emigration issue in general, we made several attempts and broached it several times. I did so during my initial meetings with Zorin, Gromyko and Vyshinskii. The first-named immediately cut short the conversation when I touched on the issue and turned to another matter. Gromyko began to discuss it and Vyshinskii was even more interested. Gromyko said that it was difficult, Soviet citizens could not leave. I answered that permission had been granted in the past which meant that this was not a matter of principle. The conversation with Vyshinskii ended with his request to present a written statement on the matter. I spoke with him on emigration of relatives and pointed out that I was not raising a political question but there were many divided families' (Minutes, ISA 60/7563a, p. 7).
5. See Doc. 383.
6. Compare the committee minutes: 'In addition to my memorandum which Vyshinskii has, I shall present material from the lists in instances when people from here [Israel] request immigration certificates for people there [the USSR]' (Minutes, p. 8, ISA 60/7563a).
7. The question asked by Riftin was: 'Do you not think that the fact that the note concerning the Middle East Command includes a paragraph on emigration might have been interpreted as a kind of threat?' Eliashiv's reply: 'No, in no way... I think that this note was a correct step which did not confine itself to a reply [to the Soviet note (see Doc. 387)] but stated what we wanted them to do for us' (Minutes, ISA 60/7563a, p. 8).
8. There is no mention of such an incident in the committee minutes.

Speaking of the economic conference,[9] Eliashiv drew the conclusion that it was not only a political demonstration but had yielded specific practical results in the expansion of economic links with foreign states. According to Eliashiv the consignment of Israeli oranges had been well received in the USSR. It was possible to sell many more oranges, and even pass off Italian oranges as Israeli. Eliashiv concluded that Israel had to develop its trade relations with the USSR, but he added that there had been no initiative by Soviet trade organizations to sell various goods and machines to Israel.

When a member of the committee asked whether there had been any deterioration in relations between the USSR and Israel, Eliashiv categorically denied this. The Soviet press might publish negative reports on Israel, but was even sharper in its criticism of other capitalist countries. It was to be emphasized that shedding light on life in Israel was not the chief concern of the Soviet public, and the Soviet press had not written about Israel recently.

As for the Soviet position at international diplomatic meetings, Eliashiv said that the Soviet delegation did not vote against Israeli proposals. As an example he pointed to the Soviet position on the passage of Israeli ships through the Suez Canal.[10]

Eliashiv stated that in the USSR the entire nation was convinced that the West was preparing for war against it. It was clear to him that the USSR did not want war but was making serious preparations for it. If there was no war within two or three years, the USSR would become the strongest and most invincible country in the world.[11] Eliashiv said that the USSR had no confidence in the assurances of neutrality given by such countries as Sweden and Switzerland. Everyone in the USSR was convinced that America was waging germ warfare in Korea.

Speaking about the work of the legation in Moscow, Eliashiv said that the legation studied the Soviet press with great care. The legation was in close touch with other foreign missions, which considered its staff to be highly competent and familiar with both the Russian–language and Soviet living conditions.

To a question about the possibility of organizing radio broadcasts in Russian from Israel, Eliashiv answered that Russian-language broadcasts from foreign countries were usually jammed. He considered such broadcasts to be entirely inexpedient. It was true that the nature of the broadcasts was significant. If the transmissions were to consist of Zionist propaganda, then it could be said in advance that they would not have any success in the USSR.[12]

9. On 5–12 April 1952, an international economic conference took place in Moscow, attended by 471 representatives from 49 countries, including an Israeli delegation. The conference unanimously passed a resolution asking the UN General Assembly to call an inter-governmental trade conference. The conference ended with an estimated $300 million worth of trade agreements concluded or under negotiation.
10. See Doc. 377, n.1.
11. This sentence on Soviet strength does not appear in the committee minutes.
12. Compare the minutes: 'Regarding broadcasts in Russian, it depends on what is in them. If it is mere information on Israel it should be done; however, if it is something else it might cause harm...The result might be that they will stop or jam Kol Zion's Yidddish programs which are heard in many places' (Minutes, ISA 60/7563a, p. 12).

In conclusion Eliashiv stated that the problem of exchanging scientific research delegations between the two countries had not yet been solved.

According to the reports of those friends who were present at the meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee,[13] Eliashiv's speech did not please his comrades in the Mapai Party, especially when he spoke about the pointlessness of Zionist propaganda in the USSR and expressed disapproval of the Israeli note about the Middle East Command. The Israeli press totally ignored Eliashiv's speech at the committee session. Usually, the reports of Israeli representatives abroad to a parliamentary committee receive wide coverage in the press.

Abramov

415
A.Ia. Vyshinskii to the USSR Minister in Israel

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28,P.3, D.165, L.187
Moscow, 27 June 1952

In connection with the government of Israel's measures to transfer the capital from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and, in particular, with the most recent decision to move the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Jerusalem,[1] the Syrian minister of foreign affairs handed our chargé d'affaires an *aide-mémoire*, which notes that these measures are being undertaken by the Israeli government in contravention of the decisions of the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Trusteeship Council and other UN bodies on the internationalization of Jerusalem. The Syrian government has therefore asked 'for states to refrain from moving their diplomatic missions from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem'.

On 20 June this year, the USSR legation in Beirut received a similar note from the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

You must follow attentively the reaction of the representatives of the US, Britain, France and other countries in Israel to the Israeli government's preparations to move the capital to Jerusalem and inform us about this in good time.

Please let us know your opinion about our possible position in the matter.[2]

A. Vyshinskii

Doc. 414

13. The reference is to Riftin.

Doc. 415

1. Between 10 and 14 May 1952, Moscow instructed Ershov to check whether the report on the Israeli intention to move its Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Jerusalem was accurate. On 15 May, Ershov cabled that on 5 May the Israeli press carried information to that effect. On 17 May he added in another telegram that he had been told by Levavi that the ministry indeed intended moving to Jerusalem in late 1952 or the beginning of 1953. In this telegram Ershov specifically added that 'the Soviet legation owns a number of rooms sufficient for its needs in Jerusalem' (see AVP RF, f.059, op.28, p.57, d.345).
2. See Doc. 416.

416
A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.57, D.346, LL.36–7
Tel Aviv, 10 July 1952

The internationalization of Jerusalem is unacceptable to us, because it would mean that we openly acknowledge the occupation of Jerusalem by the Americans under the UN flag.[1] But our refusal to support the proposal in the UN to internationalize Jerusalem does not mean that we must recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. At present Jerusalem is in fact divided into two parts: the new part, where the Jews live, and where there are a number of Israeli government offices, and the old part, occupied by Transjordan, which includes the so-called holy places (the Holy Sepulchre). Our previous position in the UN on the partition of Palestine into two states – Israeli and Arab – would be more consistent with the division of Jerusalem between Israelis and Arabs. We must always keep in mind that more than 800,000 Arab refugees, barbarously expelled from Israel by the Jews, barely manage to eke out a meagre existence.

If we were to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, it would damage our relations with the Arab countries and also with some Muslim and Catholic countries; we would not derive any benefit in the international arena, or in our relations with Israel, which is firmly on the American leash. Our legation should not move to Jerusalem. If the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs moves to Jerusalem and is followed by the American, British, French and other missions, then we must discuss a move by our legation separately, using it as part of our pressure on the Israeli government to gain possession of our property in Jerusalem.

It is said in diplomatic circles here that the French and the Turks do not intend moving to Jerusalem. It seems that the British, too, will adopt this position.

There has been a press report that the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs will move to Jerusalem in November this year.

Abramov

1. This is apparently a reply to Doc. 415.

417
A.Ia. Vyshinskii to V.A. Kholodkov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.059, OP.6, D.14, P.39, L.3
Moscow, 11 July 1952
Secret

To the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Union of Societies of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent of the USSR, Comrade V.A. Kholodkov,

The USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers that the delegation of the Soviet Red Cross to the XVIIIth International Conference of the Red Cross should not object to recognition of the Society of the Red Shield of David as the Israeli national Red Cross organization nor to its admission to the Federation of Red Cross Societies.[1]

USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs
A. Vyshinskii

418
A.N. Abramov and M. Popov to G.M. Pushkin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.5, P.14, D.37, LL.14–18
Tel Aviv, 28 July 1952
Secret

With regard to the distribution of Soviet literature in Israel, we wish to communicate the following:

The demand for Soviet literature is very considerable in Israel and grows yearly. It includes belles-lettres, as well as scientific–technical and political works. This can be explained primarily by the composition of the population (about half of the inhabitants speak Russian) and by the ever increasing authority of the USSR, which heads the camp of peace and democracy.

Understandably, local reactionaries and the American embassy, which actively interferes in Israel's internal affairs, would like to put a stop to the dissemination of Soviet literature in Israel.

1. See Doc. 248.

Since the middle of 1951, the Israeli authorities have been creating more and more obstacles to the distribution of Soviet literature. Since September 1951, the customs authorities have been holding up deliveries of books to the bookselling firm of Haifalepak. Subsequent deliveries to the firms of Boleslavsky and Lepak were also held up.

The excuse given for detaining the books for Haifalepak and Boleslavsky was that these firms had imported many more books than allowed by the import licenses issued to them. Books for Lepak were held up after the customs accused its manager, Moshkevich, of forgery, of a purely technical nature, of certain invoices. A few days ago, Lepak succeeded in proving the illegality of detaining its book deliveries. Haifalepak and Boleslavsky managed, after great efforts, to get some of their books released, but Haifalepak had to forfeit import licenses for the whole of 1952, while about 10,000 packages, containing 90–100,000 books, remain impounded.

As a result of these and other hindrances on the part of the local authorities, the distribution of Soviet literature in Israel has been vastly reduced and will in future be limited by the quantities fixed in the licenses.

All the local firms working with Mezhdunarodnaia kniga received licenses for the import of Soviet literature in 1952 totalling about thirty thousand pounds sterling, paid at the new exchange rate, which equals sixty thousand Israeli pounds. However, the three firms mentioned received only half that amount.

The reason for holding up Soviet literature is the increasingly palpable anti-Soviet line of Israeli foreign policy and the interference of the US embassy.

In spite of the fact that payment for Soviet literature is made in Israeli pounds, paid into a closed account in a local bank, in September 1951 the customs authorities held up shipments for Haifalepak together with literature from third countries, for which Israel did not have sufficient foreign currency.[1]

All these firms' requests, to increase, as a result of greater demand, the size of the licenses which was established some years ago, have been refused by the Israeli authorities.

At the beginning of July of this year, Minister of Education and Culture Dinaburg, responding in the Knesset to members of the Communist Party and Mapam concerning the release of impounded books and increasing the sum of import licenses for Soviet literature asserted that the Israeli government could not increase the sum of the licences because the money from the sale of Soviet books was being used to maintain the Soviet legation, which therefore was not receiving transfers of foreign currency, and, as a result, Israel was not receiving adequate injections of hard currency.

---

1. In an effort to improve the negative trade balance and to compensate for the freezing of Israeli sterling holdings in Great Britain (about 40 million), the Israeli government pursued a policy of severe regulation of foreign exchange. The controller of foreign exchange allocated foreign currency according to instructions of the minister of finance, with priority given to import of capital, machinery and raw materials.

While hindering the distribution of Soviet literature, the Israeli government assists in the distribution of American books, including pornography and trashy literature.

On 9 June of this year, Israel and the US concluded an agreement (see my conversation with Sneh of 11 July) essentially permitting unlimited import of American literature, paid for in Israeli pounds, which can be spent without restriction by the American embassy for 'cultural, educational and other activity' in Israel.

The signing of an agreement on the unlimited import of American literature has highlighted the Israeli government's discrimination against Soviet literature.

At the initiative of the Communist Party and the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR, a special public committee was formed to struggle against restrictions on the distribution of Soviet literature in Israel. The public committee intends to prepare a number of articles for the press and to launch a mass campaign for the release of the impounded books and for a considerable increase in the licenses for the import of Soviet literature.

In addition, on 14 July a delegation of activists of the league went to see Levavi, the director of the East European Division in the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a few days later Dr. Sneh, the league secretary-general, spoke to Avriel, the director-general of the Ministry of Finance. Levavi and Avriel both promised to cooperate in securing the release of the impounded books and getting the licenses increased. One can not, however, expect any radical change in the situation from the intervention of these civil servants.

We believe that in the course of negotiations with the Israeli delegation on the purchase of oranges, we might suggest that some of the payment for the oranges be made not in dollars but in Israeli pounds earned by the sale in Israel of further large consignments of Soviet literature.

With the constant increase of American imperialist anti-Soviet propaganda in Israel, through, among other things, American literature and including the establishment of a shop selling books in *Russian* published in the US, and a 'gift' of ten thousand American gramophone records from the American Quakers etc., we should seek ways to increase the distribution of Soviet literature. Mezhdunarodnaia kniga must remedy a number of flaws in its work:

1. Mezhdunarodnaia kniga frequently sends Israeli firms books which have no market. This burdens the very limited licences available;

2. Mezhdunarodnaia kniga has still given no definite answer to a number of orders for Soviet gramophone records to be sold in Israel, in particular orders from the Haifa section of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR, and from Boleslavsky, who could obtain special licences for the import of such records;

3. In its open letter No. 519/36 of 19 June 1952 to Boleslavsky, Mezhdunarodnaia kniga confirmed that it had received from it the sum of 5,100 Israeli pounds, which exposed Boleslavsky to the danger of criminal prosecution,

since Boleslavsky, on the instructions of Mezhdunarodnaia kniga, pays certain sums directly to the Soviet legation in order to repay the latter's debt; this is done without an import license and without going through a bank. Such operations by Boleslavsky and the firms Haifalepak and Lepak can not be mentioned in open correspondence but only through the USSR legation in Israel.

Chargé d'Affaires of the USSR in Israel
A. Abramov
Second Secretary of the Legation
M. Popov

419
A. Levavi to Sh. Eliashiv (Moscow)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2511/17
Tel Aviv, 12 August 1952

[...][1]

It is my understanding that there are three topics for political activity on the legation's agenda, and we already discussed them before you left.

I have submitted to the minister a draft of a note about reparations from East Germany which I think should be submitted in Moscow just prior to the favourable conclusion of reparation talks with West Germany, or perhaps later, after the Knesset and the parliament in Bonn have validated it.[2] If the minister manages to read this draft, it will be sent to you by this mail, but we shall inform you by telegram of the date on which it is to be submitted. Please cable us if you wish to propose any changes.

If the draft has not been sent to you by this mail, then I shall think of a way of transmitting it to you in good time when I return from my vacation.

We must not postpone any further acting in Moscow on emigration from the Eastern bloc. This has now almost entirely stopped. Perhaps a dozen people a month will be leaving Poland (who knows for how many months). Czechoslovakia is hermetically sealed, Hungary is making a mockery of the agreement [on the emigration of] 3,000 people[3] (after an interval of some seven to eight months they are sending us a convoy of 129 people, of whom more

1. The first part of the document, which is personal and administrative, has been omitted.
2. See Docs. 410 and 427.
3. Reference is to an unofficial agreement between Israel and Hungary for a quota of 3,000 immigration permits.

than a hundred are social cases), and we have some three hundred people more to come within the next two years or so. Romania's gates have been closed for some seven to eight months now. The talks being held on every possible and every virtually impossible occasion in the capitals of all these countries and in all other possible venues have brought no concrete results. It is a matter of conscience to try and raise this subject at the highest approachable level in Moscow. Whatever the chances of success, we can not keep silent any more. The demand on the part of the public will necessarily also intensify constantly if it is not possible to reply, even if only in the Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, that this has indeed been done, that we did not shirk from making some sort of attempt. For we must remember that the stoppage of immigration from Romania, for instance, sudden, unexpected, cruel and arbitrary as it was, created many human problems, in addition to the Jewish national and social problem. So many human lives have been torn apart and the people will not accept this as inexorable.

It is surely not necessary to remind you of the issue of relatives resident in the Soviet Union. I assume that you are preparing the next step, which has had to be postponed for unrelated reasons. I think that it will not be difficult to find a test case among the routine applications being dealt with by the legation, perhaps one of the cases for which the head of the Consular [Division] expressed the hope that they would find a solution after three or more years of waiting. But perhaps you would prefer a different line and go back to the list which was worked on in the past.

We have 'dispatched' two delegations to you lately, a trade delegation and a sports delegation, seventeen Israelis in all. This is a record for Moscow and you must have your hands full. Let us hope that these visits bear fruit.

Warmest regards from Rika and from myself to your wife and to you, to the Argamans, the Arokhs and the Kehats. All the best!

Yours,

A.L.

420
A.Ia. Vyshinskii to the USSR Minister in Israel

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.31, D.166, L.35
Moscow, 13 August 1952

To: The Soviet Minister, Tel Aviv,

The foreign press has recently begun again to publish numerous reports that the governments of the US and Britain have renewed their efforts to set up a so-called Middle East Command in the guise of a so-called organization for the 'defence' of the Middle East.[1]

Report urgently what you know about this and also how the government of Israel and Israeli public opinion are reacting to those plans of the Anglo-American bloc.

You must follow this matter closely in the future and inform us of all the most important statements on it by Israeli official circles and public figures.[2]

421
A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.57, D.346, LL.103–6
Tel Aviv, 16 August 1952

Disagreements between the US and Britain about the creation of a Middle East Command are the result of aggravated differences between the countries in the Near and Middle East. Contrary to British plans to set up the headquarters of the command in Cyprus and to plan the defence of the Middle East without the participation of the countries of that region other than Turkey, the United States has proposed creating a consultative organization for Middle East defence (MEDO), in which the Arab countries, Turkey and the Western states 'could discuss the best form of defence for the Middle East'.

As a representative of the Israeli government announced on 10 August, the government has not been approached about the proposed creation of MEDO.

Some politicians with whom I have had the opportunity to speak on this topic consider that the US is disinclined to set up a Middle East Command until it is assured of the support of the countries of the Near and Middle East.

---

1. In mid-August 1952 the US and British governments made public their plan to establish a Middle East Defence Organization (MEDO). This organization, for joint consultation and planning, but no bases or stationing of troops, was to be open to all Middle East countries.
2. At the bottom of the document by hand: 'For information only, brief prepared by order of the minister, 13.8.'

Disagreement between Britain and the US is to be seen in the fact that in case of war, Britain regards the Near and Middle East as a line of defence of its communications between the centre and its dominions, whereas for the US, the Near East is important from the point of view of aggression and attack from this region. The American plan to create a command envisages separate consultations with Israel on its 'contribution' to the defence of the Middle East. While the Arab states will get American military aid through MEDO, Israel will receive it separately 'to preserve the equilibrium in the Middle East'. There has been no expression of discontent with this plan in the Israeli press.[1]

From my conversations with members of the Israeli parliament it may be concluded that in Israeli military circles there are supporters of the British plan; in particular, the chief of the general staff of the Israeli army, Yadin, agrees with Britain's plans, which treat the Middle East as a line of defence, and he is against accepting any military aid from the US, believing that in that case the Israeli army would fall completely under American control. In Yadin's opinion, if there were to be military operations against the USSR, Turkey, which is the first line of attack on the USSR, would be occupied; Egypt, which is the second line, would be crushed, and Israel would thus be left to the mercy of fate. There are reports that Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, who is also minister of defence, is taking steps under United States pressure, to replace Yadin with Maklef, who recently came back to Israel from the US.

Pro-British circles in Israel are alarmed by the ceaseless American pressure on Israel to gain concessions in favour of the Arab countries and consider that the British plan to set up headquarters in Cyprus, without the participation of the Arab countries, is preferable to the American proposal, even if this is accompanied by a promise to supply arms without payment. The semi-official government paper *Jerusalem Post* came out on 11 August in favour of the plan for a command independent of the Arab states.

Israeli government policy is aligned with that of the US. This is also confirmed by the agreement with the Americans, concluded on 23 July this year but published only on 12 August, to give Israel the right to buy arms in the US[2] and by the government of Israel's statement that it would be ready to increase the period of conscription from two to two-and-a-half years.

In conversation with me, Sneh, the leader of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR and a member of the Knesset, spoke about the government's attitude to Israel's participation in the Middle East Command as follows: the Israeli government fears that the command might be established with the participation of Arab countries but excluding Israel. The government would favour Israel's participation in the command together with the Arab

1. This is the reply to Doc. 420.
2. In January 1952, Israel applied for reimbursable military aid from the US within the framework of the Mutual Defense Assistance Act. On 1 July, the American ambassador informed Ben-Gurion of Israel's eligibility for this aid, upon certain conditions (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 7, No. 220, pp. 342–4 and Doc. 424, n. 1).

countries. In such a situation, Israel could count on recognition by the Arab states. Finally, the most desirable option would be this: Israeli participation in the command, with the inclusion of Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia, but no Arab states.

The present Israeli government is obsequiously ready to take part in any aggressive grouping directed against the Soviet Union. However, although Israel is ready to sell itself in advance to the US and Britain, it exploits, for its own interests, the differences between these countries.

Abramov

422
A.I. Denisov to M.A. Suslov (Moscow)

COPY: GARF, F.5283, OP.22S, D.386, L.23
Moscow, 20 August 1952
Secret

To the Secretary of the Central Committee of the AUCP(b), Comrade M.A. Suslov,

The chargé d'affaires of the USSR in Israel, Comrade Abramov, has conveyed to VOKS a request by Dr. Sneh, the secretary-general of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR, that on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the league, VOKS send a cultural delegation to Israel and invite a delegation of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR to Moscow.[1]

Since we have doubts about the expediency of inviting a delegation from Israel to the USSR or sending a Soviet cultural delegation to Israel, we intend to do no more than send a telegram of greetings to the secretary-general of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

The board of VOKS requests your instructions.[2]

Chairman of the Board of VOKS
A. Denisov

1. For Abramov's telegram, dated 13 August 1952, see AVP RF, f.059, op.28, p.57, d.346, l.100.
2. On 26 August, Soviet Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Podtserob sent the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv the VOKS telegram rejecting an exchange of delegations and promising to send a telegram with greetings to the league (see AVP RF, f.059, op.28, p.31, d.166, l.58).

423
A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs[1]

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.57, D.346, L.110
Tel Aviv, 20 August 1952

In an interview with a United Press correspondent on 17 August, Ben-Gurion said that Israel had not yet been approached about participation in the Middle East Command. When asked about Israel's attitude to the command, he said: 'Israel is ready to defend its sovereignty and democratic freedom by all the means at its disposal. For this purpose it is prepared to cooperate with everyone who has the same aim at heart.' The entire local press regards Ben-Gurion's statement as an unqualified agreement to take part in the command. Speaking of Israeli–Egyptian relations, he said that Israel was not interested in the Sudan but demanded that the Security Council resolution be implemented and that Israeli ships have the right to use the Suez Canal. It should be noted that during the whole period of Israel's existence, not a single Israeli ship or any other ship with a cargo for Israel has been allowed to pass through the canal.

Ben-Gurion told the same correspondent that Israel had not yet had an answer to its request that Soviet Jews be permitted to immigrate to Israel [Ben-Gurion said]:

> If peace is ensured for the whole world, I can see no reason why Jews who want to immigrate to Israel should not be allowed to do so. I think that the government of the Soviet Union understands that the solution which has been applied to all nationalities in Russia, namely, autonomy within the Soviet state, has not resolved the Jewish question, since the experiment in Birobidzhan was not successful, and the Jews are at present the only extra-territorial group without its own territory in Russia.[2]

In a speech in the Knesset on 18 August, Ben-Gurion, flirting with the Arab countries in order to ensure joint participation with the Arabs in the command, spoke with approval of the present Egyptian government and said that there were no reasons for disagreements with Egypt and that 'cooperation with Israel would help Egypt overcome the political and social difficulties with which it is struggling'.[3]

1. This telegram was sent in response to an urgent request from Moscow to transmit the content and Israeli press coverage of Ben-Gurion's interview with UPI (telegrams of 19 and 23 Aug., filed under AVP RF, f.059, op.28, p.31, d.166, ll. 45, 54).
2. In fact, there were a number of other ethnic groups. Besides the Jews, the Germans and the Poles were the only sizeable groups (over one million) without an autonomous unit of one sort or another.
3. On 18 August, during a routine debate in the Knesset, Prime Minister Ben-Gurion surveyed events in the Middle East and, referring to the new regime in Egypt following the deposition of King Faruq, said that 'there is.... no reason or basis for a quarrel between Egypt and Israel'. Then he offered Israeli cooperation in overcoming the political and social difficulties Egypt was undergoing (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy*, Vol. 7, *Companion Volume*, Editorial Note, pp. 204–5).

The Israeli press considers it inevitable that Arab countries will be brought into the command and reacts neurotically to every hostile utterance by Arab politicians, which it sees as hampering an agreement on Israel's participation in the command.

I am sending a detailed memorandum concerning the Israeli position on the Middle East Command by diplomatic pouch.[4]

Abramov

424
A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.57, D.346, LL.122–7
Tel Aviv, 21 August 1952

On 21 August, Knesset member Dr. Sneh, called on me and told me about Sharett's declaration of 19 August at the well-known session of the Knesset Committee on Foreign Affairs and Security.[1] Sharett made a declaration which was quite unexpected by the members of the committee.

He said that Israel's situation was such that it must follow the US without any preliminary conditions or reservations.[2] In justifying this policy, he argued that Israel was closely linked with the US by historic and other ties. These links should be understood more broadly than Israel's dependence on the US in economic and other relations. The links were long-lasting, profound and multi-faceted. In order to create something *substantial* in Israel, external dependence on the US was essential. When Israel had achieved something *substantial,*[3] it could then gain independence, thanks to the inherent strength of this substantial factor. If they rejected dependence on the US now, they would never build their state. Consequently, they could never achieve independence. For example, to develop its economy Israel needed oil, for which it had to

---

Doc. 423

4. On 24 August 1952 Abramov added to this report a review of Israeli press comments on Ben-Gurion's interview (AVP RF, f.059, op.28, p.57, d.346, l.131).

Doc. 424

1. On 23 July 1952 the governments of Israel and the United States reached an agreement, whereby Israel became eligible to receive military equipment on a reimbursable basis under the Mutual Security Act. In accordance with this agreement, Israel presented its official request for American military assistance on 29 July, at the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee regular meeting. Mapam representatives Riftin and Ben-Aharon asked Prime Minister Ben-Gurion about the provisions of the US laws on military aid and the committee decided to discuss the Israeli application for US military aid with Foreign Minister Sharett on 19 August 1952. A report on this meeting and notification of a forthcoming committee meeting were apparently sent by the Soviet legation to Moscow, which explains why the telegram uses the term 'known'.
2. There is no such utterance in the FASC minutes of 19 August 1952 (ISA 60.7563/6).
3. The term 'substantial' does not appear in Sharett's statement.

accept dependence on the US, i.e., grant concessions to the Americans. When their own oil extraction developed, they would be able to gain independence by exploiting their own oil. If they followed the advice of the Left in this, they would not be dependent on the US, but neither would they have oil.[4] In order to attain independence, Israel had to go through a stage of dependence. Sharett said that in the parts of the world controlled by the US, there lived about eight million Jews, who were part of the Jewish people, whereas in the Soviet world there were about 2–2.5 million, living as individuals. The figure of eight million included the Jews in all the capitalist countries.

Ben-Aharon, representing Mapam, asked whether Sharett rejected all Israel's links with Jews living in socialist countries.[5] Sharett answered that if the USSR changed its attitude to the Jewish question, Israel could also change its attitude to the USSR. But, frankly speaking, there was no prospect of a change of attitude to the Jewish question in the USSR. Today there was only the American world and the Soviet world. Israel could not exist without external economic and financial assistance. Israel's regime was democratic, and it could, therefore, receive aid from the US, but to get aid from the USSR, they would have to change their regime to the Soviet type, and the people of Israel would not agree to that. Therefore they must accept aid from the US, which would mean they had no need to fear a change in Israel's regime.

Israel's ties with the US were based on the future technological development of the country. When he was in the US, Sharett had visited the wonderfully equipped factory managed by Lilienthal, who showed him all the technological achievements of the US. Lilienthal told Sharett that Israel could make use of all the technological achievements of the US. If Israel wanted to develop its culture and technology, it need not waste its strength trying to reach the level of the United States. All it needed to do was to imitate everything in the US. The USSR had also had much success in technology, but the USSR would not share its achievements with Israel. Israel was objectively linked with the US both in peacetime and in war.

Mapam member Ben-Aharon, apparently shaken by Sharett's statement that Israel must be linked to the US even in wartime, said that even if everything that Sharett said was true – and in his opinion it was not true – even that could hardly justify linking Israel with the US in wartime.[6]

---

4. Compare Sharett's version in the FASC minutes of 19 August 1952, p. 29: 'There was a debate in the Knesset on the Oil Law and MK Ben-Aharon asserted that it was necessary to form a company which was exclusively Israeli, etc. In my view this is childish, assuming that it was said in good faith – because if it wasn't, that's a different matter entirely.'
5. No such question by Ben-Aharon appears in the FASC minutes. At one point in his statement Sharett said: 'There is a theory in the Jewish world of an increasing tendency towards a riff between the State [of Israel] and the Jewish Diaspora. This process, resulting from the establishment of the State, leads to the creation of two wholly different types of Jews, and a process of Jewish assimilation. I think that these utterances are unfounded' (FASC Minutes, 19 Aug. 1952, p. 27).
6. No such exchange of opinions is recorded in the FASC minutes.

Sharett answered that even if Israel were not now linked to the US, in a war Israel would be on the same side as the US.

Sharett went on to say that the time was approaching when American aid to Israel would come to a halt. There had been great difficulties with aid in 1952, since a large number of opponents had emerged in Congress and in the Senate, who spoke against the continuation of economic aid to Israel. These opponents stated that if economic aid were continued, Israel would never balance its economy. If aid was stopped, the economy would be balanced, albeit at a much lower level. United States military aid to Israel was another matter. The US was always ready to give them military aid. And they should not think that military aid was not also economic aid. For instance, Israel needed to develop the port of Haifa for economic purposes, for which there was no money, but America was ready to give this in the guise of military aid. Military aid from the US to Israel would certainly bring a military mission, which would distribute weapons received from the US for units of the Israeli army in accordance with the Americans' own plans. McDaniel's economic mission was giving a great deal of aid to Israel, which would be able to use the mission to direct dollars to military ends.[7] This might also be true of a military mission. They hoped that through a military mission Israel would be able to get all that it needed. Sharett added that there was a difference between the American system and the Soviet system: the Americans throw nets over peoples, but there are holes in the nets which allow them to manoeuvre; the USSR tosses an endless carpet, which stretches without interruption from one territory to another – and it is a carpet without a single hole.

After Sharett's speech to the committee, according to Sneh, there was an atmosphere of profound depression. However, the members of the Foreign Affairs Committee representing the government bloc supported Sharett's statement.

We are sending a record of the speeches made to the committee by the next diplomatic pouch. I will limit myself to reporting on the speech by Harari, the representative of the Progressive Party, who said that he had always stood for Israel's neutrality, but since this had proved impossible, he agreed with the government line. He noted, however, the huge gap between declared and actual foreign policy. Israeli public opinion had no idea how far the government had gone in its alignment with the US, and therefore it was necessary to prepare Israeli public opinion for the direction which the government was actually taking.

---

7. Bruce McDaniel arrived in Israel at the beginning of 1952 at the head of the Technical Cooperation Administration charged with supervising and directing the assistance awarded to Israel within the framework of the Mutual Security Act. Compare Sharett in the FASC minutes, 19 August 1952, p. 31: 'What you [Mapam] have been writing about McDaniel is comic, MK Ben-Aharon, it is ridiculous and an insult to the intelligence of anyone who is familiar with the material.'

Taking account of Sharett's speech and Ben-Gurion's official statement about Israel's readiness to take part in the Middle East Command,[8] we consider that the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs should make a statement and issue a warning about the Israeli government's responsibility for drawing the people of Israel into an aggressive bloc against the USSR.[9]

Abramov

425
G. Rafael to M. Sharett (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 93.08/357/13
New York, 3 September 1952
Secret

A CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE IAKOV MALIK

About a month ago, when we learned that Malik was about to return to the Soviet Union for a vacation or for good, Mr. Eban requested a meeting with him. The meeting did not take place because Malik was out of town.

On 22 August I attended the Committee on Disarmament. Before the meeting began, Malik approached me, said he regretted not having been able to meet Eban and asked whether I would be prepared to pay him a visit on any date which suited me.

The meeting took place on 26 August at the Soviet delegation and it lasted about an hour and a quarter. Malik's personal attaché, Poliakov, was also present; he took notes and sometimes also acted as interpreter.

Malik began by saying that he was glad to see that the item on Palestine had disappeared from the assembly agenda. Ever since the Palestine issue had been resolved at the UN in 1947, the policy of the Soviet Union had been to let the parties settle points of disagreement which had remained, as a result of the war, among themselves, in direct negotiations, and that is why the Soviet Union had opposed the establishment of the Conciliation Commission and the prolongation of its mandate. The development of the Palestine question in and outside the UN proved the Soviet attitude to have been justified and practical. That is why the Soviet Union welcomed the omission of the Palestine item from the agenda of the Seventh Session. I replied that we also saw no

8. Reference is to Ben-Gurion's statement to UPI on 17 August 1952 (see Doc. 423).
9. On 23 August 1952, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Pushkin sent a high-priority (*vne ocheredi*) telegram: 'Check thoroughly and urgently inform whether the Israeli press has published any reports on Sharett's statement in the Knesset Foreign Affairs Committee on 19 August, stating that Israel should follow the US without reservations. If there were reports, relate their content' (AVP RF f.059, op.28, p.31, d.1266, l.53).

particular advantage in prolonging the commission's activity, but owing to our political relations with the countries represented on it, we had to move cautiously in our efforts to have the commission gradually dissolved. I informed him in brief about our negotiations with the commission on the release of frozen accounts of Palestinian refugees.[1]

We then turned to the *activity of the UN Relief and Works Agency* and I said there was a prospect of its report being discussed not in the Political Committee but in one of the technical committees. Malik showed no interest in this subject and did not even ask whether progress had been made in solving the refugee problem.

I then directed the conversation to the *Jerusalem issue* in order to ascertain the position of the Soviet Union on the Palestine embroglio in its entirety. I referred to the leading article of that morning's *New York Times* which warned of the interest evinced by the Soviet Union in the Russian religious institutions in Jerusalem. Malik replied that he had seen the article, which was a smokescreen laid for concealing American schemes. 'What do they want of us?', he asked, laughing, 'When we pray in the churches – that's not good; when we do not pray – still worse; when we do not take any interest in church buildings – very bad; and when we show interest in our religious property – that is the worst of all.'

He said that the Arabs were kicking up a fuss about the transfer of the Ministry [of Foreign Affairs] to Jerusalem,[2] 'But who pays attention to them', he said, and added: 'Why do your American friends interfere in your internal affairs and oppose the transfer of your foreign ministry?' I explained that there was no need to be shocked by the Americans' position on this issue, and that we thought it transient and designed only to reassure the Arabs. I told him he should not worry about us and our relations with the US: we would come to terms with them in this matter as we had in many others, and I added jokingly that we would propose to the US a new form of mutual assistance: we would refrain from taking a position on the location of the Department of State, and in return the US government would refrain from advising Israel on the location of its Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Malik reacted with hearty laughter and after a moment he said in all seriousness: in the opinion of the Soviet Union the location of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs was within the jurisdiction of the government of Israel, and they considered that neither the UN nor any other government had any right to interfere in this matter. I closed the subject by saying jokingly: 'So we may assume that you will not insist on raising the Jerusalem issue at the next session.' He replied: 'We are just not interested in the Palestine problem nor in Jerusalem and we hope nobody will raise the issue.'

1. Negotiations to release bank accounts left by Palestinian refugees in Israeli banks were opened in 1952. The agreement concluded at the beginning of December 1952 provided for an initial release of one million Israeli pounds of blocked accounts.
2. See Doc. 415, and n. 1 there.

Malik then asked me about the significance of *the Prime Minister addressing Nagib from the forum of the Knesset.*[3] He added: 'So you really think you can come to terms with this military dictator?' I replied:

> I can not predict the prospects for success of the prime minister's appeal. We are still waiting for a response from the Egyptians. We do not believe that we have the right to select regimes with which we are prepared to live in peace and to disregard the others. In the international arena, we adhere to the concept of coexistence and think that only thus can world peace be achieved, and the same goes for our small world of the Middle East. We are surrounded by autocratic, reactionary and socially backward regimes; we are not responsible for their existence and we have no right to act against them. The test for us is whether they wish to live in peace with us and recognize our sovereignty. If it turns out that Nagib's government is stable and is prepared to establish relations with Israel, we shall welcome it.

Malik expressed his agreement with our stand and emphasized the importance of coexistence. He pointed to the fact that many changes had taken place in the countries of our region, of which the most outstanding was the supplanting of adult monarchs by babies and young boys. He called this process 'royal dehydration', which seemed to signal the abolition of the royalist regimes in the Middle East. 'Faruq was right', said Malik, 'when he said that in the end only five kings would remain in the world – four in the deck of cards and the fifth – the King of England.'

We then began discussing the *Suez Canal issue* and I informed him about developments since the resolution of 1 September.[4] Malik interrupted me, by asking: 'Has there really been no progress at all? Have no loopholes been discovered yet enabling the passage of goods to Israel?' I pointed out that Egypt had not abolished the regulations prohibiting free passage to Israel and informed him of our appeal to the three powers which had sponsored the resolution. Malik said that the Soviet Union opposed any maritime blockade anywhere and therefore did not agree to such a blockade in the Suez Canal. We were right to approach the three powers responsible for adopting the resolution and it was their business to ensure its implementation, and it was to be hoped that they would succeed in this.

I referred to last year's debates at the Security Council and mentioned Tsarapkin by name. Malik interrupted me: 'Poor Tsarapkin, how will he live without the Palestine question – he swims in this problem like a fish in water?' (Two days after this conversation, the news came from Moscow that Tsarapkin would not be returning to his post at the UN but was being transferred to another position.)

---

3. See Doc. 423, and n. 3 there.
4. See Doc. 377, and n. 1 there.

The conversation turned to the Middle East Command. After Malik remarked that all the problems in the Middle East would assuredly be solved soon to the Americans' satisfaction with the establishment of the Middle East Command, I said that we had already had an opportunity to discuss this matter in his last talk with Mr. Eban, with my participation, at the Soviet embassy in Paris, on the conclusion of the assembly session there. Mr. Eban had pointed out on that occasion that the establishment of this command was far from having been implemented, and that nobody had approached Israel with a request to join a nonexistent body. I was ready to reiterate these words and to declare today that we were still a long way from setting up a regional defence system and that what Mr. Eban had said then was also valid for the present, because no one had invited Israel to join such a body or any other body. On the other hand, we read with regret reports in the Soviet press regarding the establishment of – imaginary – foreign bases in our country. Malik said that he could not argue with me about reports appearing in the Soviet press because he did not know exactly to which items I was referring, but it was enough for him to read in the American press that the US government considered Israel an American stronghold in the Middle East. I explained that what was meant was a stronghold of democracy, and that it should not come as a surprise that people were impressed by Israel's democratic and progressive character which made it an isolated island of stability surrounded by a stormy sea of tremors and permutations. The same prime minister had been head of the state ever since its inception, while perhaps more than twenty governments had fallen around us and had not been replaced exactly by democratic parliamentary systems. Violence, assassinations and intrigues were the forces determining the establishment or fall of governments in the Arab world. This was the background against which the friendship and the admiration that the American government and people felt towards Israel should be viewed.

Malik replied: 'The US government does not do anything for humane reasons, but only according to cold political calculation.' And here he developed a complicated philosophy, somewhat along these lines: The existence of the Soviet threat was good for the world; it aided the weak because it helped them to get stronger at the expense of the bigger powers, and Israel belonged to this category. He had no objection to Israel exploiting this opportunity for its own ends – for building up its country. The Soviet threat also aided the strong because it provided them with a pretext to get stronger still, and this was the real danger. If it were not for the Soviet spectre, a serious and open conflict would have developed long ago between Britain and the US, and it was only the imaginary Soviet threat that enabled these two countries to blur their fundamental contradictions, and this, too, was an important Soviet contribution to world peace. Here Malik concluded his lecture with a mocking smile.

He then returned to reality, saying that he wished to exchange opinions on the problems in the coming assembly. His first question was whether there were prospects that the Americans would agree to discuss the substance of the

Korean question, or whether this time, as well, they would adopt purely procedural tactics. I used this opportunity to sound him out on the prospects of peace. He said:

> One should not expect any progress in the negotiations on Korea in the next few months; the American military are not interested in peace, because they fear that a truce would lead to a lowering of tension and a reduction in military production. The Stock Exchange too reacted to every optimistic report with a fall in the price of shares. Clark's[5] military moves and the bombings in particular prove that the US is not interested in peace at this time.

I referred to a report in the press saying that the Democratic Party was interested in an armistice agreement in order to strengthen its position in preparation for the elections. Malik replied that there was an agreement between Stevenson and Eisenhower not to attack each other on the issue of peace in Korea. If Truman had been a candidate, the situation would have been different, because the Korean War was blamed on him and he would have had an interest in clearing himself. I replied that, from everything we knew from our contacts with the government of the United States and from following developments among the American public, we were certain that both the American government and the American people wanted an end to this war, and that it was a mistake to think that there was only one street in the US – Wall Street. In order to get to know America one had to recognize that there were many streets leading in different directions and not necessarily meeting at the centre, so that basing a political assessment on fluctuations on the stock exchange would not produce scientifically accurate results.

To my question as to whether a renewed initiative by the Soviet Union might be expected, such as his broadcast of the previous year,[6] Malik replied that the present time was not appropriate for any initiative. And when I asked him: And if the initiative comes from a third party?, he replied: At this stage it is not worthwhile encouraging a new initiative from any direction. If the Americans want peace – they will withdraw their artificial objections in the matter of prisoners of war. But this is improbable, because America wishes first to complete the rearmament of Germany and for that end it needs the atmosphere of the Korean War.

It might already now be assumed that the process of *negotiating about Germany* by means of notes will soon end, because it was known that the US government opposed a meeting of the four foreign ministers, as proposed in the last Soviet note. (From what Malik said it may be concluded that as long as the negotiations on the unification of Germany continue the Soviet Union will do nothing to put an end to the Korean War.) I said that Israel opposed the resurrection of a strong and militarized Germany, which it considered to

5. General Mark Clark, commander in chief of UN forces in Korea from May 1952.
6. Reference is to Malik's speech on UN radio on 23 June 1951, in which he called for holding talks on a Korean cease-fire and armistice as the war entered its second year (see Doc. 369 and n. 1 there).

be a threat to world peace. However, the rearming of Germany was a result of the international tension which had culminated in the Korean War, and therefore any country wishing to reduce the tension and to act indirectly against a rearmed Germany was committed to doing whatever it could to put an end to the Korean War.

Malik asked about the significance of the entire Arab–Asian bloc having placed the Tunisian question on the agenda, while the Moroccan question was registered only by Iraq. In his opinion, it was Britain which had put Iraq up to it. I permitted myself to doubt this assumption, and stressed that the entire North African problem could be explained against the background of the rivalry prevailing in the Muslim world. He interrupted me, saying: the rivalry between Egypt and Pakistan. I replied that this was not the only one, there was also rivalry between Iraq and Egypt, and that usually Iraq's political boldness was in inverse ratio to the proximity of the relevant problem to Iraq and its vital interests. The representatives of Iraq, which had no common border with Israel and which was insulated from direct contact with us by Syria and Jordan, stood out among other Arab countries in the ferocity of its incitement against us. Since Iraq played no important role in the Tunisian issue, it therefore sought an issue in which it could shine in all its glory, and chose to stand at the head of the defenders of Morocco. Altogether, it was to be understood that the Arab states' concern for the lot of the North African peoples did not derive from their wish to aid in liberating these nations, but from a new Muslim imperialism which was manifesting itself in various places.

I asked whether we should again expect proposals on *disarmament* by the Soviet Union at the coming assembly. Malik said he thought that the question of disarmament would not be in the forefront, because the Committee on Disarmament was in effect 'defunct'.

I finally asked him about their position on the plans for shortening the assembly's duration and making it more efficient, and establishing an interim committee between sessions. He said that the UN was gradually approaching the Soviet stand, as expressed years ago when it opposed the establishment of an interim committee (the Little Assembly), and now everybody was convinced that setting up that committee was a total failure. I said jokingly that on all issues over which the Soviet Union and Israel adopted similar positions, the UN followed in their footsteps. (See the 29 November 1947 resolution, the resolution on the Conciliation Commission and now the issue of the 'Little Assembly'). Malik laughed at this heartily.

In contrast to his custom, Malik spoke at this meeting mostly in Russian, which was translated into English by his attaché. This was apparently because of his wish to be precise in what he said, and to ensure that everything was taken down in detail by his attaché.

When the meeting was over, Malik saw me to the door, saying as we parted: 'I wish you luck.'

Yours,

G. Rafael

426
Meeting: Sh. Eliashiv – G.M. Pushkin (Moscow, 4 September 1952)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2492/17A

Two new deputies to the minister, Pushkin and Podtserob, were appointed during a rotation of posts at the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[1] The first was Soviet ambassador in Budapest when Ehud Avriel was stationed there; after that he was moved to Berlin, and one can see from his appointment the importance attached to the presence at this time in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of somebody who is well briefed on the German issue. Podtserob was previously secretary-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in the last few years participated in the activities of the United Nations Assembly. Both are courteous, cultured and pleasant conversationalists. I had met Podtserob before and also paid him a courtesy visit on my arrival here. He showed interest on that occasion in what was happening in Israel and expressed his admiration for our achievements in development and construction. He repeated those remarks once or twice afterwards in short conversations I had with him on various occasions. I did not think it necessary to pay him a visit now, but congratulated him on his appointment when we met at one of the receptions. As to Pushkin, whom I had not met before, I requested through Protocol an introductory meeting with him and decided to use that opportunity for submitting one of our pending matters to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

As I have said, he is cordial and agreeable. He is intelligent and is blessed with a sense of humour. My talk with him lasted for some twenty minutes and we passed quickly from subject to subject. He remembers Ehud [Avriel] and recalled various details about him, such as that he was born in Vienna and that on his visits to Budapest he used to stay in a hotel and did not have an apartment of his own. He welcomed my introductory visit and thanked me for it. As usual in these conversations, he started by praising my Russian, and then we passed to Russian literature, and he said emphatically that since the 1946 AUCP(b) Central Committee resolution on literature[2] there had been astounding progress in literature (I definitely disagree with that).

I informed him of the raising of the British and French legations in Israel to the level of embassies and told him what I had been instructed to say. He showed interest and promised an answer.[3] I took that opportunity to ask him whether they had a geographical division of functions between the deputy

1. In July 1952 First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Gromyko was appointed USSR ambassador to Great Britain.
2. See Doc. 70, n. 3.
3. Following approaches by Britain and France to raise their level of representation in Israel to that of embassies, the Israeli minister was instructed to put out feelers as to whether the Soviet Union desired to make a similar change (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 7, No. 291, p. 432).

foreign ministers, and whether there was anybody in particular whom I should approach if I wanted to meet a deputy minister. He replied that there was no such division and that I could always decide on whom I wanted to see. It might, however, be suggested that I meet another deputy minister, depending on the matter to be discussed. I brought up as an instance the matter of German reparations and said that in my opinion it would be best to discuss it with him – the expert on German affairs. He said he would be prepared to talk this matter over with me, but at the same time he qualified this by saying that though he was cognizant of matters relating to Germany he was not well briefed on Israel. Then he made several remarks about the astonishing development of East Germany that he had witnessed during the last few years, and which was in contrast to West Germany of which he spoke deprecatingly as a run-of-the-mill Western country.

He displayed interest in what was happening in Israel, and I told him in brief about the absorption of immigrants, dwelt on our relations with the surrounding countries, on their obstinate refusal to enter into negotiations with us on a peace settlement and on our experience so far with the Conciliation Commission. He asked about the composition of the Conciliation Commission, and whether I thought that the countries represented on it really wished for peace between the Arab states and us. He also asked for my opinion on what was being done in Egypt. When I said that very little had been done so far to improve the internal situation and stressed the modest extent of the agrarian reform on which reports had been received, he interrupted and started defending this reform (dividing the land among the landless peasants against payment) and pointed out that a similar reform had also taken place in Hungary after World War II.

Yours,

Sh. Eliashiv

427
Note of the Israeli Legation in the USSR to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs[1]

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.5, P.11, D.5, LL.6–8
Moscow, 15 September 1952

The Legation of the State of Israel presents its compliments to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in answer to the ministry's communication of 25 March 1952[2] to the chargé d'affaires of the State of Israel about reparations and restitution to the State of Israel by the German Democratic Republic, respectfully brings to the attention of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the objections of the government of the State of Israel.

The demand of the government of Israel is not, in its essence, a demand for war reparations similar to that envisaged by the Potsdam Agreement of 1945, or such as would form part of the peace treaty with Germany which is to be concluded in the future. The mass slaughter of the Jews of Europe and the plunder of Jewish property by the Nazi authorities far surpass even the most appalling military disasters. For most of these crimes there can be no possible reparation. However, the Jewish people are still suffering from some consequences of the destruction which can be significantly righted by economic measures. These measures, which are linked with compensation for material losses [to be paid] by the Germans (including the inhabitants of the German Democratic Republic and its government), can not be delayed any longer. The exceptional nature of the demand put forward in the Israeli government's note to the government of the USSR on 12 March 1951[3] leaves no doubt whatsoever that the satisfaction of this demand is not linked to the peace treaty with Germany and does not depend on it. Moreover, conditions in the State of Israel are a consequence of the absorption there of the majority of the Jews who escaped the Nazi destruction; for Israel bears the incredible burden of the expenditures related to that absorption. All this makes it vital that this demand be satisfied in the shortest possible time.

---

1. After signing a reparations agreement between the German Federal Republic and the State of Israel on 10 September 1952, Sharett declared in Paris that Israel would demand restitution from the German Democratic Republic as well. On 12 September the director of the Third European Department in the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, M. Gribanov, reported to Vyshinskii on Sharett's statement, reviewed previous Soviet–Israeli contacts on the subject (see Docs. 384 and 406), and recommended not to react to this statement unless the Israelis applied officially to the USSR. Gribanov suggested that if the Israelis applied to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, they should be given an answer in line with what they had received on 24 March 1952 (see Doc. 406). Vyshinskii agreed (AVP RF, f.089, op.5, p.12, d.20, l.3). On 15 September 1952, Eliashiv asked for a meeting with Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Pushkin, was received on the same day and submitted the Israeli note on restitution from the German Democratic Republic (see Pushkin's report on the meeting with Eliashiv in AVP RF f.089, op.5, p.11, d.5, l.4). This is the Israeli note submitted by Eliashiv.
2. See Doc. 406.
3. See Doc. 385.

Moreover, the government of the State of Israel presumes to point out that a number of states have received and are still receiving reparations from East Germany, and to mention in this connection the message from the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, I.V. Stalin, to the prime minister of the German Democratic Republic, Otto Grotewohl, which was published in *Pravda* on 16 May 1950.[4]

As regards compensation for losses and the return of property to individuals, the government of Israel notes that the German Democratic Republic[5] has not only failed to make satisfactory legislative provision for this, but has even appropriated this property and made it impossible for the persons concerned to claim it. In this connection special note should be taken of the order dated 6 September 1951 and published in the German Democratic Republic, according to which all property of persons living abroad passes into the hands of the state bank, and which, in fact, rules out the possibility of the return of property to Jewish victims of Nazism who do not wish to return to German soil.

Moreover, in recent months, administrative decrees have come into force in the German Democratic Republic which completely annul the rights of those Jewish victims of Nazism who escaped from Germany and do not wish to return to the country in which they experienced so much suffering. Their property, plundered by the Nazis, remained and is now in the hands of the authorities of the German Democratic Republic. This attitude of the government of the German Democratic Republic to the return of property, and the absence of any sign of good will on the issue of compensation for material losses caused by the Nazis to the Jewish people, rules out any possibility of direct[6] communication between the State of Israel and the government of the German Democratic Republic until there is a basic change in the line taken on this matter by the German Democratic Republic.

On the basis of what has been said above, the government of the State of Israel expresses the firm hope that the government of the USSR will make use of all its considerable influence on the government of the German Democratic Republic in order to persuade it to move in the direction indicated and will thus pave the way for a just solution to the question of restitution and compensation for losses by the German Democratic Republic, in accordance with the State of Israel's notes to the government of the USSR of 16 January 1951 and 12 March 1951.

The Legation of the State of Israel takes this opportunity to pay its profound respects to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

---

4. See Doc. 406 and n. 2 there.
5. In the original, mistakenly typed '*Narodnaia*' (People's), rather than '*Demokraticheskaia*' (democratic).
6. In an urgent telegram dated 16 September 1952, the East European Division of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs instructed Eliashiv to insert here the word 'official' (*Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 7, p. 520); however, Eliashiv had already submitted the note the previous day.

428
M. Kehat[1] to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

COPY: ISA 130.02/2418/13
Moscow, 18 September 1952
Secret

RE: THE VISIT OF THE ISRAELI VOLLEYBALL TEAM IN MOSCOW

The dispatch of the sports team to Moscow can be assessed from many aspects. I shall not analyze it now; I only wish to tell you about our feelings and experiences and also about those of some of the local Jews when our boys were staying in the capital of the Soviet Union.

Owing to changes in the itinerary and the delay in receiving the telegrams sent on the way, we did not know the exact time of the team's arrival. Just by accident Arokh heard a conversation at the Metropol where they had reserved rooms for the Israelis, and when we did not get a clear answer from the airport we contacted the Metropol and they said that 'the Israelis arrived a short time ago'.

We lost no time in leaving for the Metropol, Arye and Dvora Arokh and myself. The boys were still tired from the journey and excited by the welcome they received there. They were happy to see us.

Their Russian escort (two English-speaking escorts were put at their disposal, a man and a woman) was somewhat put out by our arrival (it was not according to plan) and addressed us in not too friendly a manner, saying that they were now arranging a reception for the team in the hall downstairs and that we should not hold them up. So we went downstairs together. Seventeen girls were waiting there with bunches of flowers; they stood in a line, welcomed the newcomers and offered them a bunch each. (As the team numbered only fourteen, we got the rest of the flowers.) The reception ended with a group photograph.

A crowd gathered in front of the hotel. The badges and the Hebrew writing on the lapels of the boys' jackets drew the attention of the crowd outside and of the hotel guests. We invited the team managers over for Friday night.

There were special festivities at the legation that night. We are not used to visitors from Israel, and here we had both the citrus delegation and the sportsmen at the same time. The visitors told us about their impressions from the journey, the attention given to them and the various facilities provided by their hosts.

The next day the team was busy with training and only the managers – Ben-Zvi, Kaspi and Farhi – accompanied us to the synagogue. Attendance there was considerable, this being *Shabbat mevarkhim*.[2]

1. Moshe Kehat, attaché at the Israeli legation in Moscow.
2. See Doc. 348, n. 3.

Some of the worshippers gathered around the podium, staring at the men and at the badges on their clothes; many tried to greet them by nodding their heads. The guests were honoured by being called up to the Tora – and Kaspi was asked to read the *haftara*. He did it with great elegance, accentuating the words *Zion* and *Jerusalem* when reading out the blessings and bringing tears to the eyes of many of those present.

When parting from the rabbi, he asked about everybody's place of birth, and when Ben-Zvi said we would all come the following Sabbath, he replied: 'It will be a great pleasure; we will not be able to talk about your affairs but we shall welcome you for the communal prayer.'

The preparations for the ceremonial opening of the games were in full swing. The flags of the delegations competing in the championship games were displayed at the Dynamo stadium. Our flag, which was fluttering there among the other flags in the four corners of the stadium, attracted the attention and the eyes of the hundreds of Jews who had come to see it. Among the tens of thousands of spectators watching the opening parade there were hundreds of Jews who, together with us, greeted the Israelis enthusiastically and warmly. The order of appearance in the stadium was alphabetic, our team was the third, after Hungary and before India. The sign saying 'Israel' and the flag were carried by a local boy and girl; they marched very nicely and were loudly cheered. The preliminary part ended with speeches and greetings, and the games began.

The team was provided with a special bus bearing the sign 'Delegation from Israel'. The bus crossed the city every day, the boys singing Israeli songs from time to time.

Some of those looking at the boys saw them only as 'foreigners' coming to compete in the games. But others were glued to their places; the songs, the words, touched them deeply and we saw again what we had seen at the synagogue – a tear in the eye, a sigh, a nod of the head and hands waving. When walking around town, the boys from time to time met Jews who came up guardedly, touched their badges, said 'shalom' in Hebrew and left quickly.

It was unfortunate that the first match was against the Russians – the world volleyball champions. The thousands of spectators saw our boys station themselves against the famous Russian team. Though our boys were well developed, they looked like small children compared to the stalwart Russians, like David against Goliath. The miracle did not repeat itself and Goliath was the winner. The Russians did not exert themselves at all and did not even play their best, winning hands down. The game was preceded by a short ceremony with an exchange of flags and greetings, and after the game the winners parted warmly from the losers.

The next match was against Lebanon. We came to the stadium praying for a win and we naturally accorded great importance to this event. We feared that the Lebanese might not appear. When they did, negotiations about the ceremony began through the escorts. The custom is that the competing teams

exchange flags and greetings before the game. The Lebanese pretended to be offended, did not bring their flag, and announced that they would not accept the flag from our team. We also feared that they would desecrate our flag. After consulting the minister and the staff of the legation, our boys announced that they would do everything according to accepted international procedure. The Lebanese yielded, and though they came without their flag they accepted ours from our captain and handed it over to the umpire.

The game was lively and tense and we had the upper hand. The determination to beat the Lebanese was strong. The spectators, who as a rule had been objective, now cheered every good play and execution by our boys. The final score was 3:0 to Israel; our flag was slowly raised to the top of the mast in the centre of the field by two Russian boys, all the crowd standing at attention and the Red Army military band playing 'Hatikva'.

We were very excited, looking at the flag waving, at the crowd, our eyes meeting the eyes of many Jews. The desire to know what they were feeling was aroused. This has been a great experience for us. The efforts had been worthwhile, the results were not disappointing, it was not a sporting achievement for us but a Jewish Zionist victory on the territory of the Soviet Union. The flag and the anthem were, we felt, an encouragement to many Jews. We congratulated the boys on their/our victory, treated them to various dainties and wished them further successes.

I will not relate here the other matches. I am not expert enough to judge the level of the games. The second match with the Lebanese disappointed and grieved us; maybe our boys were too sure of victory and did not make the necessary effort. But the victory over the Finns was clear and elegant. The same scenario, the flag and the anthem, and a crowd of thousands standing at attention in Israel's honour.

On free days, and also in the afternoons after the matches, the hosts took our boys sightseeing, and to the theatre, concerts, the opera, etc. The boys were in constant contact with us, consulting us and relating everything. We spared no efforts to make them feel at home in the legation. They were our guests on every Sabbath eve, at a cocktail party given before Argaman's departure, and at the special farewell party given in their honour.

On the second Sabbath of their stay the entire team went to the synagogue. The podium was too small to seat them all, and when some of them went down and joined the public one of the beadles came up to me and requested that they return to the podium. All my arguments were to no avail; he insisted that 'it was not proper for distinguished guests to sit among the public', and I had to call them back to the podium.

During prayers the same scene repeated itself: hundred of eyes fixed at you but lips not moving. Here was a group of young men from Israel in the midst of a Jewish community, and no one came up, no one asked a question, no one spoke. The boys felt it. They had not imagined that this was the actual situation and now even the sceptics among them have become convinced.

When they left the synagogue some of the Jews tried to greet them and one man shouted: 'Give my greetings to our beloved country!' and left quickly.

As mentioned above, the team had been invited to our cocktail party together with over a hundred foreign guests from among the diplomatic corps as well as Russian representatives. The boys made a good impression, some of them conversed with the guests, and later, when the 'foreigners' had left, we remained with the Israelis, singing and dancing for several hours.

In a modest ceremony on Friday evening, in the presence of guests who happened to be there that evening, Kaspi gave us a small flag in the name of the team, as an expression of gratitude for the cordiality of the minister and the legation staff, who had made their stay in Moscow so pleasant – much beyond what had been expected, leaving an indelible memory with all of them. The minister replied for all of us, thanking them for the joy and pleasure which their visit had brought us.

On the day preceding their departure we organized a farewell party at the legation. We all sat down at laid tables, together with the members of the citrus delegation, who were also to leave that night. Everybody was in high spirits in a free Israeli atmosphere, something that we were not used to in Moscow.

The minister opened by saying more or less as follows:

They should know that they had been staying in a city with a large Jewish population, in a country where the Zionist movement, the Jewish workers' movement and Jewish culture had developed. Nothing was left of all this, and they had no contact with the half million Jews here. This would not have happened in any other place – even with a smaller Jewish community, and this alone needed explaining. The minister asked each of them to think over what he had seen here and that every one of them sum up his own independent impressions. The country which they had just visited had one great achievement to its credit: the incontrovertible proof that a community of workers was capable of managing on its own a great country and its economy. Whether the country should be managed and socialism achieved in precisely this way – was a question that everyone had to answer for himself. Whoever thought this over seriously and honestly and came out with an affirmative answer – that was his privilege. But whoever decided that there were things he could not agree with – should not be afraid to criticize and he should find the courage to defend his opinion and not adhere to preconceived stereotypes. The Jewish labour movement had always been distinguished by its courage and its strength and for standing up for its opinions, even when it did not have much power in Palestine and its supporters in the Diaspora were weak and few. The Bund had fought stubbornly for years for its right to exist as a Jewish organization within the general [Russian] labour organization, even when faced by some of the greatest social–democratic thinkers in Russia, from Lenin to Plekhanov; the Zionist Socialist Party and Poale Zion[3] had fought for their right to join the

3. Two Zionist socialist parties in the Jewish Pale of Settlement in tsarist Russia.

Socialist International as a Jewish division. Nor did they ever give up their opinions and ideals over a period of many years though everybody was against them. Even the faction of Poale Zion which accepted the principles of the communist movement did not agree to join the Comintern except on certain conditions, and in spite of being a small group it insisted on its rights and kept the Comintern busy with deliberations for a long time. This independence of thought which had always been a quality of our movement was vital for us now – to enable us to assess what was happening in this country and to relate their concepts to our reality. The minister concluded by stressing the importance of the team's visit in the Soviet Union, thanking all those who had organized it and made it possible and wishing the team success in the future.

The boys then raised three cheers for the Israel legation in Moscow – raised their glasses *lehayim* [to life] three times and enjoyed the good food and the warm hospitality.

The time for parting had come, the bus with the signboard 'Delegation from Israel' was waiting for them at the door of the legation, and when it departed they burst out singing '*Hevenu shalom aleichem*' [We have brought greetings unto you], to the astonishment of the passers-by on quiet Glazovskii Street.

Our impression was that they had passed the test well, and that we also had fulfilled the pleasant obligation of hospitality. This privilege of being in the company of young Israelis for days and weeks had never happened before to the staff of the legation in Moscow, and now we are returning to the days of loneliness and tension which are our lot here.

The highest praise should be given to those who helped in this achievement. No time or effort should be spared to organize such events again in the future.

Yours,

M. Kehat

429
Meeting: B.F. Podtserob – Sh. Eliashiv (Moscow, 8 October 1952)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.5, P.11, D.5, L.9
Secret

Eliashiv called on me at his own initiative. He said that with his appointment as a member of the Israeli delegation to the General Assembly session, he had come to say goodbye before leaving for New York.[1]

In the course of the conversation, Eliashiv said that the government of Israel had at first thought of applying for membership on the Economic and Social Council [ECOSOC] but later decided against it. Eliashiv added that Israel

1. The Seventh Session of the UN General Assembly opened on 14 October 1952.

expected that the Israeli representative would be elected as one of the vice-presidents of the General Assembly session. Eliashiv said that they hoped for the support of the Soviet delegation.

I answered that on this matter the Israeli delegation would do best to contact the Soviet delegation directly. Eliashiv concurred.

Eliashiv went on to say that, in his opinion, the session was hardly likely to deal seriously with Palestine, including the fate of Jerusalem. In this connection, he referred to the Soviet Union's position on Jerusalem, saying that, so far as he knew, it did not differ from Israel's, since Israel was against internationalization.

The rest of the conversation consisted of protocol.

At the end of the conversation, Eliashiv said that in his absence the Chargé d'affaires would be the first secretary, Arokh. I wished Eliashiv *bon voyage.*

The conversation lasted 12 minutes.

First Secretary E. Novikov was present.

Deputy USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs
B. Podtserob

430
A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.57, D.346, LL.221–2
Tel Aviv, 19 October 1952

Of late, the Israeli government has radically changed its attitude towards the USSR. This has been manifested in speeches, openly hostile to the USSR. made by Prime Minister Ben-Gurion and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sharett, in officially inspired press attacks on the USSR, and in books and articles full of libellous fabrications against our party leader, the Soviet government and other party leaders. The Israeli government has taken a stand of complete disregard of our legal rights to property in Israel, as can be seen from the exchange of notes on this topic, which are of an offensive nature. Even with regard to assets which had previously been acknowledged as the legal property of the USSR, the Israeli government is now devising various manipulations to make it impossible for us to exercise our legal rights.

There is no doubt that by further procrastination and purely formal replies, the Israeli government will obstruct the realization of our legal rights in every way.

The import of Soviet literature is in practice forbidden,[1] while the Americans are allowed unlimited imports of theirs; there is strict censorship only of

1. On the Soviet book trade in Israel, see Doc. 418.

Soviet films, which in fact amounts to forbidding them to be shown (which was not previously the case) – all this indicates that the Israeli government has chosen a course which is incompatible with normal diplomatic relations.

In this connection, we believe that the question arises whether it will serve our purposes to imply by the arrival of our minister in Israel the existence between Israel and the USSR of normal relations such as do not in fact exist. Would it not be better to delay the minister's arrival for a certain period – especially in light of the Israeli Foreign Ministry's request to raise the legation to the status of an embassy[2] – and at the same time to let the Israelis understand that the abnormal state of Soviet–Israeli relations is their fault.

Since the TASS correspondent's report sent to you on 17 October gives an incomplete and inaccurate account of Ben-Gurion's speech, we are sending you separately an excerpt from the text of his letter [*sic*], which has been published here in the newspapers.

Abramov

431
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

COPY: ISA 130.02/2457/14
[New York] 28 October 1952

A TALK WITH V. ZORIN

I have already given you the gist of the talk by cable.[1] Here are the details:

We decided to begin the discussions with the Soviet delegation at the UN with Zorin, as it is he who sits on the [Ad Hoc] Committee. He was glad to receive us. I introduced Eban; there was of course some difficulty with language. Zorin knows neither French nor English; he suggested that we speak in German but I refused. So I had to accept the role of interpreter, and I translated Eban's words and answers verbatim.

Eban began by recalling the friendly relations he had had with the former Soviet representatives to the UN, Gromyko and Malik, and expressed the hope that similar relations would obtain between himself and Zorin. Zorin replied

---

Doc. 430

2. On 12 August 1952, Sharett instructed Eliashiv to convey to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs that Great Britain and France were proposing to Israel to raise the status of legations on both sides to that of embassies. Were the Soviet government to extend a similar proposal to Israel, suggested Eliashiv, the Israeli government would react favourably (ISA 130.09/2325/5). Eliashiv informed Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Pushkin of this proposal on 19 August 1952.

Doc. 431

1. Eliashiv's telegram is dated 24 October and filed under ISA 130.09/2930/18.

that there was no reason to think it would be otherwise. Eban presented in brief our main problem. He said we would have preferred not to have the Palestine question on the agenda. But as things stood, we thought that the Assembly should recommend to both sides to initiate direct negotiations, with no mediators, no conditions and no resort to previous resolutions. He pointed out that, as far as he knew, this attitude was in keeping with the position of the Soviet Union on Palestine, which was expressed in the Fifth Session of the General Assembly, and said he hoped that the Soviet Union would now also adhere to that line.

Zorin replied that he had not yet studied the subject and therefore could not give a definite reply. He remarked that the British and Americans had made efforts to raise the Palestine question at the [Ad Hoc] Committee, and asked us for our opinion. Why should these countries be interested in according such importance to this problem and what was behind it?. He repeated the words 'What is behind it' several times, in almost all his responses. We replied that it was not the intention of the British and the Americans to move the question of Palestine to the top of the [Ad Hoc] Committee's agenda, but to put off other items to a later stage. Zorin replied that they could have raised other issues, not necessarily the Palestine one.

Eban said that it was perhaps more convenient for certain countries to let the Arabs rebuke us than to revile France, and Zorin appreciated that response. Then he reiterated that he felt intuitively that there was something behind it (always the same expression), that Britain and America's interest in the conflict between us and the Arab states was not marginal, but that it appeared that they wanted to add fuel to it and extend it, and he advised us to find out about this. He said again that he had not yet managed to study this issue, which had anyway been artificially set up and was extraneous to the deliberations at this assembly. He agreed that their position was indeed that conflicts should be resolved by direct negotiations between the parties. But he still had to study the issue and hear what others had to say about it.

Eban said that we had not yet decided whether we should submit a resolution in the spirit of what had been said, or whether other countries would do so, and we wanted to consult them before the resolution was put before the assembly. Zorin replied that he was always willing to be consulted.

As you can see, Zorin was very guarded in what he said and tried not to commit himself to anything. He was very pleasant and cordial in general and welcomed the opportunity to talk with us.

Yours,

Sh. Eliashiv

P.S. Please transmit a copy of this letter to our legation in Moscow.

432
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.089, OP.5, P.11, D.5, L.248
Tel Aviv, 9 November 1952

In connection with the 35th anniversary of the Great October Revolution, the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR organized about 100 mass meetings in towns and agricultural settlements. Ershov, Abramov, Rozhkov and Raevskii made short speeches in reply at meetings in Tel Aviv, Haifa, Jaffa and Rishon [Lezion].

On 8 November the league's club (which is called the Israel–USSR House of Friendship) and a large Soviet book exhibition were opened in Tel Aviv.

The democratic press published articles about the anniversary of the October Revolution over several days. The Communist Party and Mapam published Hebrew translations of Comrade Stalin's work *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*,[1] Comrade Malenkov's report,[2] and the speeches of Beria and Bulganin at the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Ershov

433
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.57, D.346, L.247
Tel Aviv, 9 November 1952

On 8 November a reception was held at the legation on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Among those present were: Acting President and Chairman of the Knesset Sprinzak, Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, ministers, the chief of the general staff, the mayor of the city of Tel Aviv (Jaffa), the heads of embassies and legations of foreign states, members of the public and representatives of the press. The adjutant to the president conveyed Weizmann's congratulations.[1] In all, about 275 people were present.

Ershov

Doc. 432

1. The first Soviet edition of Stalin's last treatise was published in 1.5 million copies and appeared in the bookstores in October 1952.
2. Reference is to the official Central Committee report delivered by Georgii Malenkov at the opening of the 19th Party Congress in Moscow on 5 October 1952.

Doc. 433

1. President Weizmann, who had been bedridden for a long time, died the following day.

434
Ia. Malik to I.V. Stalin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.07, OP.25, P.16, D.84, LL.12–13
Moscow, 10 November 1952

Secret

To Comrade I.V. Stalin,

The President of the State of Israel, Ch. Weizmann, died on 9 November this year; the Israeli chargé d'affaires in Moscow officially notified the Presidium[1] of the Supreme Soviet and the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Although the communication about the death of Weizmann was addressed to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers it appropriate, in accordance with current practice, to send a telegram on behalf of Comrade N.M. Shvernik to the acting president of the State of Israel, Sprinzak.

For your information I report that telegrams of condolence were sent on behalf of Comrades N.M. Shvernik and A.A. Gromyko on the death of the King of Sweden, Gustav V, in 1949; on behalf of Comrade N.M. Shvernik and A.Ia. Vyshinskii on the death of the King of England, George VI, in 1952; and on behalf of Comrade N.M. Shvernik on the death of the President of Iceland, Bjernssen, in 1952.

A draft telegram is enclosed.[2] It has been submitted for the approval of Comrade Shvernik.

Please give due consideration.

Ia. Malik

1. At the 1952 party congress the name of the Politburo was changed to Presidium, and the All-Union Communist Party (bolsheviks) officially became the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU).
2. The draft (on file, AVP RF, f.059, op.28, p.31, d.166, l.133) was approved by the Presidium the same day.

435
M. Popov to N.N. Chigar'kov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.5, P.4, D.17, L.29
Tel Aviv, 19 November 1952

To the Head of the Near and Middle East Department of the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (VOKS), Comrade N.N. Chigar'kov,

I report that on 8 November this year, the club of the local branch of the Israeli League for Friendly Relations with the USSR was opened in Tel Aviv with an official ceremony. The club is officially called The Israel–USSR House of Friendship. At the same time, two exhibitions – 'The Soviet Book' and 'Soviet Graphic Art' – were opened on its premises. The following representatives of the legation were present at the opening of the club: Counsellor Comrade Abramov and Second Secretaries Comrades Popov and Ishchenko. Dr. Sneh, Eidelberg and Stavi made speeches and Comrade Popov spoke a few words of greeting.

Although extensive advertisement of the new club and exhibitions has not yet begun, there are already 100–120 visitors every day. Preparations are now being made for collective visits to the exhibitions and for the development of regular club activity.

The All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (VOKS) has given us a 16mm film projector and an epidiascope, which I propose to transfer to the club for use in the very near future.

One of the friends of the Soviet Union gave the new club a good combination radio receiver and gramophone.

A selection of documentary, scientific–technical and educational 16 mm. films will be essential for the work of the club and also for non-profit distribution through the league and other progressive social organizations.

If VOKS could supply its representative in Israel with such films, the scope of the club's work could be considerably increased.

We are suffering from an acute shortage of various materials needed for the expansion of the league's work, particularly in its smaller branches.

Please send us regularly books, gramophone records, exhibits, 16 mm. films etc. Above all, we need gramophone records of the national anthem of the Soviet Union and portraits of Lenin and Stalin.

I earnestly request that you consider our needs and meet them in their entirety.

Please find enclosed:

1) two copies of the Hebrew translation of Stalin's work *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, published for the 7 November anniversary this year by Sifriat Poalim, the Mapam Party's publishing house, in a print run of about 5,000 copies, and translated by Yasur;

2) the Hebrew translation of G. Nikolaeva's novel *The Harvest*,[1] published in two volumes early in October of this year, in a print run of 4,000–5,000 copies, and translated by the local writer Ben-Amram.
Enclosures: As stated above.

Representative of VOKS in Israel
M. Popov

436
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.57, D.346, LL.274–5
Tel Aviv, 8 December 1952

During the past week the anti-Soviet and anti-communist campaign in Israel has intensified. The reactionary press publishes articles against the Soviet Union every day. The Mapai Party organized more than 100 mass meetings throughout the country to protest against the trial of the gang of conspirators and agents of American imperialism in Prague.[1] On 3 December the Unity of the Nation Society, which takes a semi-fascist line, but which had not been active hitherto, organized a 'public show trial' in Tel Aviv, at which the USSR, Czechoslovakia and the Communist Party of Israel were vilified and an attempt was made 'to accuse' them of antisemitism. Several rallies were organized by the fascist party al-Manar[2] and by the General Zionist Party. The leaders of the Mapam right wing and centre, following their Zionist ideological leanings and under pressure from Mapai and the Jewish Agency, also joined in this campaign.

Doc. 435

1. Galina Nikolaeva's novel *The Harvest* was published in 1949 in the literary journal *Znamia* (Nos. 5–7) and awarded the Stalin Prize in 1951.

Doc. 436

1. On 20 November the trial of Rudolf Slansky, former secretary-general of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, and 13 other high-ranking party and government officials began in Prague. They were accused of espionage, treason, sabotage and cooperation with the intelligence services of Western countries, Yugoslavia and Israel. During the trial, the Jewish nationality of 11 out of the 14 defendants was explicitly noted and the State of Israel and the Zionist movement were vilified. Also, two Israeli citizens, who had been previously arrested in Czechoslovakia, Mordechai Oren and Shimon Orenstein, appeared as witnesses for the prosecution. On 27 November sentence was handed down: eleven of the defendants were executed on 3 December 1952 and the other three received life sentences.
2. *Haaretz* of 4 December 1952 reported a mock trial held in Bet Haam in Tel Aviv. According to the article, chairman of the so-called Unity of the Nation party, I. Gil, acted as prosecutor. Abba Ahimeir and Wolfgang von Weisl appeared as witnesses for the prosecution. Yisrael Sheib (Eldad) acted as defense counsel. On trial were the Kremlin, the Israeli Communist Party and the Sneh-Riftin group. Two days later the Herut Party held a rally in Tel Aviv. No references to Al-Manar have been traced and the name is probably garbled.

The Czechoslovak legation was subjected to two acts of sabotage:

1) On 23 November a stone was thrown through the window of the office of the chargé d'affaires.

2) On 4 December a bomb was thrown at the wall of the garage under the legation building, smashing the wall and damaging a car.

The government of Israel is working on a draft law to ensure state security. In this law the death sentence or life imprisonment is stipulated for anyone charged with undermining the sovereignty of the state, attempting to overthrow the government, changing the state system, preparing for civil war, or passing on to the enemy or disseminating information about closed sessions of the government and parliamentary committees.

The attitude of Israeli ruling circles and Zionist parties to the Prague trial, in addition to the content of the trial itself, confirms that Zionism and its representatives and participants are direct agents of American imperialism.

Ershov

437
East European Division of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Israeli Legation in Moscow

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/5
Tel Aviv, 10 December 1952

Yesterday unknown persons attempted to set fire to the Soviet legation's car. Lotan and Sattath [Tesler] expressed their regret on behalf of the [Foreign] Ministry, saying that the police had begun an investigation and that the guilty persons, when apprehended, would be severely punished. The man from the legation answered that this statement was accepted; however, the minister reserved the right to react if so instructed by his government.

East European Division

438
W. Eytan to Israeli Missions Abroad

COPY: ISA 130.02/2415/33
Tel Aviv, 23 December 1952
Secret

RELATIONS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMINFORM COUNTRIES

In view of the Prague trial,[1] Israel's representatives will conduct themselves in relations with representatives of the Cominform countries, including the Soviet Union, according to the following guidelines:

1) When the Israeli mission gives a reception to which the heads of all other missions are invited (such as the reception on Independence Day or any other occasion of a general nature), the representatives of the Cominform countries will also be invited.

2) The head or a member of a mission of a Cominform country will be invited to a private reception or dinner only if there are close personal relations between the host and his guest. Representatives of Czechoslovakia will not be invited.

3) Extending invitations to members of the missions of Cominform countries is to be avoided in all cases not falling under Nos. (1) or (2) above, unless there is a special reason which has not been taken into account in the above paragraphs.

4) Members of Israeli missions will not reject invitations by missions of the Cominform countries in circumstances similar to those enumerated in paragraphs (1) and (2) above. It is not to be expected that any member of an Israeli mission will be invited by a Cominform mission in any other circumstances. In the improbable case of an invitation by a Czechoslovak mission, it should be evaded.

(5) When members of Israeli missions are invited by third parties to a reception or dinner at which members of missions of the Cominform countries will also be present, they will accept the invitation. They will behave towards these representatives with cold civility and under no circumstances will they seek opportunities to converse with them. If, by chance, during the reception they are drawn into a conversation with such a representative, they will take the opportunity to express our feelings about the Prague trial and its anti-Jewish, anti-Zionist and anti-Israeli character. Conversation with Czechoslovak representatives should be avoided, without infringing on the elementary rules of courtesy.

W. Eytan

---

1. See Doc. 436 and n. 1 there.

439
G.M. Pushkin to P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.28, P.31, D.166, L.155
Moscow, 23 December, 1952

The Soviet Ministry for Foreign Trade reports that Mezhdunarodnaia kniga is encountering great difficulties in exporting Soviet literature to Israel.[1] In addition to the introduction of annual licences which limit the import of Soviet literature by Israeli firms, since 1 August 1952, the Bank of Israel has been freezing funds in Israeli currency deposited by such firms as payment for the deliveries of Soviet literature, and it does not allow these sums to be used even for the needs of the Soviet legation in Israel. At the same time, the US embassy in Israel is allowed unrestricted use of the proceeds from the sale of American literature in accordance with the agreement between the US and Israel of 9 June 1952.

Considering the introduction of these restrictions on the use of Mezhdunarodnaia kniga's funds as an act of discrimination against the USSR, the Ministry for Foreign Trade requests that the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs raise with the Israeli authorities, through diplomatic channels, the question of unfreezing the funds realized from the sale of Soviet literature in Israel, and particularly that of using these funds for the needs of the USSR legation in Israel.

Please give your views on the substance of the proposal to the Soviet Foreign Trade Ministry.

Pushkin

1. See Doc. 418.

440
A. Eban to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 93.01/2209/2
Washington, 5 January 1953

For the Prime Minister. The Jewish leaders here are confused and divided among themselves in the matter of the Prague trial.[1] The question is whether to accuse the Soviet Union of a clearly antisemitic attitude which would put it among Israel's enemies and thus abolish the last moral distinction between it and the Nazi regime. The US government is of course interested in having us adopt this stance and drawing from it theoretical and practical conclusions whose main expression would be the addition of our loud and resounding voice to those who disparage the Soviet Union along the entire propagandist and political spectrum the world over. Several Jewish organizations, mainly those close to the labour movement here, support this approach, while the advice of Goldmann, Halperin and others is to wait and see, that is, to denounce the Prague events with all their antisemitic and anti-Zionist manifestations without, however, jumping to the conclusion that the antisemitism of the Cominform is identical to that of Nazism. The immediate test case is the pamphlet about to be published by the Zionist Council in support of the sweeping condemnation of Russia as an antisemitic agent. Goldmann suspended publication of the pamphlet and it was agreed that I should give my opinion on it in the name of the government of Israel. Even if we rephrase the text more moderately, the fundamental issues will still remain and will confront us all the time.

Please advise and instruct before Thursday, when a consultation will take place in New York.

My personal inclination is to denounce the Prague trial as a separate antisemitic episode which raises serious fears about the attitude of the Soviet authorities, without, however, pronouncing judgment on the Soviet Union as if antisemitism had become a permanent element of its policy.[2]

Eban

1. See Doc. 436 and n. 1 there.
2. Ben-Gurion replied on 9 January 1953, that even though the Prague trial 'was planned down to the last detail in the Kremlin and one must be prepared for a serious change of course in Soviet policy in an anti-Jewish or at least anti-Israeli direction', he nonetheless agreed with Eban and Goldmann on the advisability of refraining from accepting 'this prognosis as a fact' (9 January 1953, ISA 130.09/2309/12).

441
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/6
Moscow, 13 January 1953

A sensational news item originating with TASS appeared today in all the papers on the exposure of a subversive gang of doctors aiming to shorten the lives of the functioning heads of the Soviet Union. Among the nine names are those of six well-known Jewish doctors and professors.[1] The principal accused is Vovsi. They are accused of causing the deaths of Zhdanov and Shcherbakov and of attempting to kill a whole list of army commanders by means of false diagnosis and harmful treatment. They were in contact with a foreign espionage service and with the national bourgeois Jewish organization, the Joint,[2] which had been set up by agents of American espionage under cover of extending material aid to Jews in other countries. The accused Vovsi admitted to having received instructions from the Joint through Shimeliovich, a doctor from Moscow, and Mikhoels, the well-known national bourgeois Jewish public figure. Almost identical leading articles are devoted to this subject in all the papers. The article in *Pravda* is headed 'Vile Spies and Murderers under the Guise of Medical Professors'. The article mentions Jews four times and calls the Joint the Jewish espionage organization. It also states that the 'exposure of the gang of doctor–spies is a blow to the World Jewish Zionist Organization'. The articles call on the Soviet people to be on the alert against the saboteurs, and point out that the Anglo-American imperialists, who are feverishly preparing for a new world war, are attempting to create in the Soviet Union what the Nazis could not – a fifth column.

Eliashiv

1. The six Jewish physicians were: M.S. Vovsi, M.B. Kogan, B.B. Kogan, A.A. Fel'dman, Ia.G. Etinger and A.M. Grinshtein. The non-Jews were: N.V. Vinogradov, P.A. Egorov and G.A. Maiorov. All occupied senior positions in the Soviet medical élite.
2. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, a Jewish charitable organization assisting Jews in Eastern Europe since World War I. The Joint was also active in the Soviet Union in the interwar period, establishing in 1924 the Agro-Joint to promote settlement of Jews in the Crimea. The Joint ceased its activities in the USSR in 1938, but assisted East European Jewry extensively after World War II.

442
W. Eytan to Israeli Missions Abroad[1]

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2377/1
Tel Aviv, 14 January 1953

To all missions. Eliashiv has not yet reported on the Doctors' Plot.[2] Note that Israel is not mentioned in the Soviet announcement. No Israeli representative should come out with any statement or official reaction for the time being. If Jewish or Zionist leaders ask for advice, tell them that there is no objection to them issuing a statement stressing that:

a) It is madness to accuse the Joint of organizing such crimes, especially as it has not been active in Russia since 1938.

b) The Jews in the entire free world are deeply concerned about the fate of their brethren behind the Iron Curtain.

c) The pejorative use of 'Jew' and 'Zionist' demonstrates that the Russian leaders are in need of scapegoats and indicates the seriousness of the internal situation in the Soviet Union.

For your information, Israel is not interested in being drawn into an open conflict with Soviet Russia because it is of vital importance to maintain our position as fully as possible in Moscow and in the capitals of the satellites.[3]

Eytan

443
S. Bazarov to P.I. Ershov (Tel Aviv)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.6, P.15, D.21, LL.45–8
Moscow, 15 January 1953
Secret

I am sending you for dispatch to the Foreign Ministry of Israel the text of a note of the USSR legation in Israel which has been confirmed by the leadership of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs; it is a reply to the note of the Israeli

1. Sent to Israeli missions in the West and to Belgrade. The missions in the Soviet bloc received another telegram, reporting on press and public repercussions of the affair in Israel and abroad, and informing them (in its seventh paragraph) that, since Israel had not been mentioned in the Soviet announcement, no official Israeli communiqué would be issued, unless necessitated by further events in Moscow (see East European Division to Israel Missions in Eastern Europe, 15 Jan. 1953, ISA 130.09/2377/1).
2. Apparently sent before the arrival of Doc. 441.
3. Eban in Washington objected to these instructions and recommended a more vigorous response on behalf of the State of Israel (see his telegram of 14 January 1953, ISA 130.09/2330/19).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 11 August 1952 about the issue of Soviet property in Israel.[1]

You should forward to the Near and Middle East Department a copy of the note which you send to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Appendix: text on three sheets.

S. Bazarov
Director, Near and Middle East Department

APPENDIX

In reply to the note of the Foreign Ministry of Israel of 11 August 1952, No.[...],[2] the USSR legation has the honour to report the following:

1. As the ministry is aware, the majority of the buildings in the 'Russian compound' in Jerusalem that belong to the Soviet Union were occupied at various times by various Israeli institutions and organizations, including the Ministries of Justice, Police, Labour and Transport, the Supreme Court, the Jerusalem municipality and others, without the knowledge or consent of the USSR legation. The legation of the USSR applied to the Central Housing Commission, which handles the rent of buildings for these institutions and organizations, with a request to come to an agreement with the legation on the issue of conditions for utilizing the above-mentioned buildings. However, the Central Housing Commission refused to do this, alluding to the absence of instructions from the Ministry [of Foreign Affairs]. In this connection, the USSR legation, in notes of 25 May and 18 July 1952, twice asked the ministry to give the necessary instructions regarding the conclusion of an agreement with the ministry on all the issues linked to utilization by Israeli institutions and organizations of buildings belonging to the Soviet Union.[3] Despite this, these institutions and organizations have been continuing to utilize Soviet property for several years without the consent of the USSR legation and without appropriate payment for the use of this property.

The mission of the USSR can not agree with the statement in the above mentioned note of the ministry to the effect that this issue lies within the competence of the judicial organs.[4] In view of this, the USSR legation insists

1. The Soviet note filed under ISA 130.11/2501/20, is dated 28 January 1953.
2. Missing in original.
3. These notes emphasized that most of the buildings described as Russian property were being used by tenants without the Soviet legation's consent. They claimed that the Russian Palestine Society attached to the USSR Academy of Sciences was the successor of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society and confirmed the Imperial Russian government had been the owner of the property of Grand Duke Sergei (see ISA 130.11/2501/20).
4. The Israeli note stated that in Israel conflicts between tenants and landlords had to be resolved by the courts, and that any person other than the registered owner attempting to make an entry in the Land Register had to apply to the court.

that the ministry give the necessary orders to all institutions and organizations which are occupying the premises belonging to the Soviet Union, to settle the matter of utilizing them with the legation of the USSR.

2. The legation of the USSR has on numerous occasions presented the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs with exhaustive proof that the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, by virtue of changes in the Russian state structure, was renamed the Russian Palestine Society. Consequently, all rights, including the rights of ownership of the property registered in the name of the former Orthodox Palestine Society belong to the Russian Palestine Society of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

In view of this, the USSR legation again insists that the ministry take the necessary measures to re-register the society's property in the proper manner and transfer it to the keeping of the mission of the USSR Academy of Sciences' Russian Palestine Society in Israel.

The legation considers it vital to point out that the status of any society, in particular its renaming, is determined, as is known, by the national law of the society concerned. Therefore the ministry's proposal to let an Israeli court consider whether the Russian Palestine Society is the owner of the property previously registered in the name of the Orthodox Palestine Society is unacceptable.

The government of Israel, despite the indisputable proof that was given, decided to place the property of the Russian Palestine Society under the jurisdiction of the custodian-general.[5] This decision can only be seen as a violation of the society's rights and as an encroachment on its [right of] ownership. In this connection the legation again insists on re-registering the said property in the name of the Russian Palestine Society of the USSR Academy of Sciences and transferring it into the keeping of the mission of this society in Israel.

3. With regard to the property registered in the name of the former Grand Prince Sergei, the ministry, in accordance with its request, was already informed that this property was, in reality, the property of the former Russian imperial government and at present is the property of the Soviet Union. The USSR legation therefore considers that in handing over this property into the keeping of the state custodian general, the Israeli authorities are violating the USSR's right of ownership of this property.

The mission hopes that the ministry will give the order to reregister this property in the name of the USSR and to hand it over to the keeping of the USSR legation.

---

5. On 28 May 1952 Levavi informed the Soviet legation that the Israeli government intended to place the property of the Palestine Society and of Grand Duke Sergei in the hands of the custodian-general. On 4 June 1952 the custodian-general announced that he was applying for a court decision. On 14 June 1952 Vyshinskii instructed the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv to protest against this action. On 29 June 1952 the Jerusalem District Court decided in favour of the custodian-general's application (AVP RF, f.059, op.28, p.31, d.165, l.162; AVP RF, f.059, op.28, p.57, d.346, l.85).

In drawing the attention of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the fact that a settlement of all the above-mentioned issues concerning Soviet property in Israel on territories controlled by the Israeli government has been delayed for a long time by fault of the Israeli authorities, the USSR legation expects the ministry immediately to take all necessary measures to re-register the property and transfer it into the keeping of the USSR legation and the mission of the Russian Palestine Society of the USSR Academy of Sciences in Israel.[6]

Editorial Note

ISRAELI GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON THE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST JEWISH PHYSICIANS IN THE SOVIET UNION

Following an initiative on the part of all political parties represented in the Knesset, except for Mapam and Maki, it was resolved to hold an urgent Knesset debate on Soviet accusations against the Jewish doctors. In anticipation of this debate the government discussed its position on 18 January. Owing to the absence of Ben-Gurion (on holiday) and Sharett (participating in the conference of Asian Socialist Parties in Rangoon), the discussion was desultory and the general tenor cautious and even timid. Lavon, the acting minister of foreign affairs, took the most active line and suggested that the government propose to the Knesset to issue a statement that would include: (a) a declaration that Israel would bring the matter before the UN; (b) an affirmation of the right of Jews to immigrate to Israel from East European countries; and (c) a declaration that the government would take measures against Israeli citizens abetting incitement against the Jewish people. Lavon's proposals, and especially his third point, encountered opposition among various ministers and it was resolved to submit the formulation to a select committee headed by Foreign Minister Sharett, who was due to return to Israel.

The Knesset debate on 19 January was tense and acrimonious. Sharett delivered the government statement that followed the general lines of Lavon's proposal. The operative sections of this statement said,

> The government of Israel will condemn, at the United Nations and from every other platform, the provocation being conducted by the communist countries against the Jewish people and the vilification of its authorized organizations, and will sound the alarm for the danger that threatens the well-being of millions of Jews in these countries.
>
> The government of Israel will continue to assert, with renewed vigour, the right of all Jews whose hearts yearn for Zion to leave their countries and immigrate to the State of Israel.

---

6. This note was submitted to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs; however, it was not dealt with due to the break in diplomatic relations between Israel and the USSR. On the original Soviet note in the Israel State Archive there is a remark handwritten in Hebrew: 'File (bombing of the Soviet legation)'.

> Any attempt made by individuals or public bodies in Israel to justify and defend incitement against Jews, which threatens their safety in any country whatsoever, will be considered by the government to be a hostile act towards the state, and all necessary and relevant conclusions will be drawn thereof.

After the government statement had been read, the Knesset resolved to refer the discussion to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee (see Minutes of the Israeli Government, 18 January 1953, ISA; *Divrei Haknesset*, Vol. XIII, pp. 481–94).

444
D. Ben-Gurion to the Members of the Israeli Government

COPY: ISA 130.02/2157/14
Tel Aviv, 20 January 1953

It came to my attention yesterday that my letter to the government of the 14th inst. was inadvertently not delivered to the government meeting which was held the day before yesterday.[1]

The debate in the Knesset has in the meantime already taken place, and I have also managed to read the [minutes of the] discussion at the government [meeting] of Sunday (18th inst.), and I feel it my duty to make a number of comments.

It seems to me that our internal bewilderment, which was also demonstrated in the government debate, is due to a confusion of concepts.

A) The Soviet Union and Maki.

From what my colleague [Moshe] Shapira said it could be concluded that these are one and the same, and our action against Maki – is an action against the Soviet Union. It is true that Maki identifies with the Soviet Union and accepts its orders – whatever they may be – with no hesitation and criticism. It is also true that the Soviet Union, by these or other means, fosters communist movements everywhere and looks upon them as its henchmen, agents, spies, supporters and disciples.

But the Soviet Union (and this goes for any other country) has no right to intervene in the internal affairs of the State of Israel, and Maki is a part not of the Soviet Union but of the State of Israel. Its members are bound by its laws (at least, they should be), and enjoy its privileges. And it is no concern of the Soviet Union whether Maki is legal or banned.

B) The attitude towards the Soviet Union as a communist state – and the attitude towards its hostile actions against the Jewish people.

---

1. Ben-Gurion's letter of 14 January 1948 has not been traced.

One should distinguish between these two concepts. I categorically oppose the Bolshevik regime. It is a house of bondage and not a socialist state; it is a regime based on murder, deceit and oppression of the human spirit, and on deprivation of the freedom of the worker and the peasant. It is a crueller and more efficient continuation of tsarist imperialism. But one should fight this regime and its external influence only by means of ideological argument, and people who believe that socialism is being implemented in Russia and that the Soviet Union is the liberator of mankind – are not criminals but are blind and deceived, and one has to conduct only *ideological* warfare against them

It is a different case when Russia attacks the Jewish people with blood libels, which are perhaps more villainous and more dangerous than those of the Middle Ages.

I understand my colleague Shapira's concern lest we do something which might aggravate the situation of the Jews in Russia. I am also aware of our powerlessness against this giant – and yet we can not let this pass without reacting. There is some measure of conscience in the world, there is public opinion, and though Russia provokes and scorns the most powerful country in the free world, America, that does not mean that it is entirely indifferent to world public opinion; otherwise, it would not have joined the United Nations. On the contrary, it makes great efforts to win over public opinion – among the peoples of Asia, Africa, America, and also Western Europe. It is too realistic [not] to understand that every state in the world has its weight and value, and I have no doubt that the object of the campaign against the Jews and Israel (apart from its internal aims within Russia and in the satellite countries) is to win over public opinion in Germany and in the Arab and Islamic countries – and also among antisemitic circles in the West.

And just as we may not boast and pretend to a greater weight and power than we [actually] have, so we must not undervalue ourselves and must proclaim who we are and wherein lies our strength. Our qualitative weight is many times greater than our quantitative weight. Both the State of Israel and world Jewry constitute a tremendous moral power, and if we can employ it in the right direction and in efficient ways, then even gigantic and brutal Russia will not be able to ignore it.

And this is not only a matter of expedience. There are moments in a nation's life when an ethical command has to be obeyed even if no practical advantage can seemingly come of it. We must not be silent now. And what we began to do yesterday in the Knesset – we have to continue doing with perseverance and resolution, namely, the following:

(1) Protest against the blood libel.

(2) Demand (even if it is impractical and will not be listened to, as I fear): Let my people go.

C) One has to distinguish between hostile acts by a foreign country and hostile acts by *citizens of the state.* Political calculation can require us to exercise *restraint* towards a hostile country, and we certainly can not make

war on Russia, nor do we want to sever our relations with it. And in the two actions we have decided on – we shall not overstep the line, though we must not dither and we certainly must not be silent.

This is not the case with regard to hostile acts by citizens of the state, and this time I am referring to Maki. And by hostile acts I do not mean their communist beliefs and propaganda. The democracy in which we believe also obliges us to suffer communist anti-democratic propaganda, and I would categorically oppose any restrictions on or discrimination against the communists, though I am aware of their deceitfulness and their threat. I was even always opposed – and I am also opposed today – to their expulsion from the Histadrut because of their communist beliefs.

But one must distinguish between communist ideology and collaboration in vilification of Israel and the Jewish people. Russia and any other country 'may' make hostile moves against another state. But this is not permitted to the citizens of the state itself. Hostility by residents of Israel against the state or against the Jewish people is a *crime* which must not be suffered. Restraint in this case – means relinquishing the state's sovereignty and responsibility.

And I can not understand how the State of Israel can permit – without endangering its existence and rejecting its mission and its very nature – the existence of an organization which stands for *hatred of Israel*, and assisting alien forces (not organizations and not states) to disseminate the poison of a blood libel against Israel and against Zionism and against Jewish organizations.

D) Democracy and anarchy.

The State of Israel can not survive unless it is a democracy, just as it can not survive, in my opinion, unless it is Zionist. But many among us have distorted views about democracy. Is the freedom of action of any person, as it is assured in a democracy, unlimited and without reservation, and does not the law provide heavy penalties for certain actions?

May a person, in the context of his liberty, do whatever he wants and say whatever he wishes? Is not this [freedom] limited when it comes to the security of the state and the rights of other people? And freedom of organization – is it unbounded? May one found an organization of thieves, forgers, murderers and rapists?

I was astonished, saddened and shocked when I read the [minutes of the] debate which took place at the government [meeting] and when I saw that some of our colleagues were making light of the serious danger involved in the vilification at the Prague trial and in Moscow – both the moral and the political danger. We are powerless to prevent this heinous crime against our people by the authorities in Prague, in Romania and in Russia. But are we also powerless to act against traitors and fifth-columnists in this country?

Is it conceivable that, in the State of Israel, with its government's permission, on the basis of its laws, on paper which it supplies and on [printing] machines which it provides and within the freedom of dissemination which it ensures – a newspaper would print what appeared in *Kol haam* on the 14th inst. and every day since then? ('A gang of murderous doctors in the service

of British–American espionage – A terrorist organization in close contact with the Joint – the physiognomy of this organization of Zionist spies was covered by the mask of a charity organization' – headlines in *Kol haam.*) I was shocked to see that the only reaction of the State of Israel to this blood libel – not against Beilis[2] but against millions of Jews and Zionists – was a warning by the minister of the interior, which has not been followed by any action so far.

This newspaper is still appearing and I assume that Maki is also holding meetings where the speeches are similar in style. And innocent young people, and what is more, innocent new immigrants, see that all this is taking place in the State of Israel, with the government's permission, and within the framework of the laws of the country, and they come to the conclusion that none of this matters. I must confess that I am deeply shaken by these pathological and criminal phenomena, and I think that I am no less a democrat than my colleagues [Moshe] Shapira, [Pinhas] Rosen and [Yosef] Serlin – and I can not understand how the law, the state and the government *in Israel* can tolerate such occurrences.

The Dreyfus trial, at the time, aroused the conscience of humanity the world over – and the State of Israel did not then exist. I know that we are living now in a world that is more brutal and cruel. And I can understand the Nazi-like tactics of Moscow's rulers. In that regime, the end justifies the means, any means. But I am talking about what is happening in the State of Israel – this state which embodies the soul of the Jewish people throughout the ages. It is not only the Jews alive today who look to the State of Israel – all the past generations, the six million murdered by the Nazis and all those slaughtered by Khmelnytsky, by the Crusaders, and by the [Roman] rulers since the destruction [of the Second Temple] – all these aspired to this state.

And I am prepared to be realistic and materialistic. After all, this is a Jewish state. Is it conceivable that it should tolerate accomplices of and collaborators with the enemies of Israel in foreign countries?

Soviet Russia is not antisemitic. Neither was Hitler. Hajj Amin al-Husayni, who is no less of a Semite than any one of us, was one of Hitler's friends and assistants. I do not believe the reports in the press that Stalin has now invited the mufti, but it is clear that Stalin is not antisemitic. What has he to do with the Semites? His present political aims require that he attack and accuse *the Jews* and their state. He is arousing worldwide *hatred of Israel.* And perhaps we can do nothing against him, but shall we permit the enemies of Israel in Moscow to maintain here, overtly and legitimately, agents of and collaborators with *the enemies of Israel*?

This is the question that confronts us. And, to my sorrow, I found no satisfactory and effective answer to it in the discussion at the government [meeting].

Yours sincerely,

D. Ben-Gurion

---

2. See Doc. 38 and n. 5 there.

445
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

COPY: ISA 130.02/2457/14
Moscow, 22 January 1953
Top Secret

THE DOCTORS' PLOT

This affair is not yet over, and we can now only speculate about its significance and attempt to draw tentative conclusions from its first manifestations. The newspapers from Israel arrived here today (*Davar*), 14 and 15 [January], and we can see from them that, apart from some confusion, some of these speculations are shared by people in Israel. So I can be very brief.

1) There is no doubt that this operation is aimed against the Jews of the Soviet Union, and one of its objects is to sever completely any contact between them and world Jewry. From this point of view, the Doctors' Plot is a follow-up to the Prague Affair. The difference is that local Jewish organizations existed in Czechoslovakia until quite recently, including the Zionist Organization, and the contact between Czech Jews and world Jewry received expression in a number of overt and meaningful ways. In the Soviet Union, however, there had been no trace for a long time of any Jewish community organization. This is why they seized on that organization of world Jewry which was the last to function here, namely the Joint. And they also clutched at the last expression of local Jewish organization, namely the Anti-Fascist Committee.

It is difficult for us to find out whether Prof. Vovsi was indeed a member of the committee, as *Davar* says in its issue of 14 January, and this should be checked in Israel (for instance, by going through *Eynikeyt*, many issues of which I gave to the Labour Archives at the time). The names of Shimeliovich and Mikhoels may have been added to the list to create a link between the doctors and the Anti-Fascist Committee. They may have involved Prof. Vovsi in the affair from the beginning because, owing to the family relationship and the identity of their names, a line can be drawn from him to Mikhoels and from Mikhoels to the Anti-Fascist Committee.[1] This committee, by the way, has not been mentioned yet anywhere, but it would not surprise us if one sunny day it, too, is mentioned, and after it – the Jewish writers, whose fate is still a mystery to this day.

2) It must be noted here that, in contrast to Prague – and this is of course only a provisory remark – the entire slander campaign here is aimed at Zionism and not against the State of Israel. Even the article which appeared

1. Miron Vovsi and Solomon Mikhoels were first cousins. During World War II, Vovsi had, attained the rank of major general (in the Medical Corps) and was a member of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.

yesterday in *Novoe vremia* (about which we cabled you),[2] when mentioning by name the Israeli ministers in Prague, did not say that Israel's legation served as an instrument of espionage and sabotage [but] that the Zionist Organization exploited the Zionists who infiltrated the legation.

3) I will stress what we have already cabled: the campaign against the doctors started a long time ago. The staff of the legation heard about it already at the beginning of 1951 from the Jews (Arokh on his visit to Odessa) and from a non-Jew, Parker,[3] who has his own sources of information. At that time it was said that Jewish doctors were being thrown out of their jobs. We heard of Dr Etinger's disappearance and informed you about it already during the High Holidays of last year, that is, in the autumn of 1951. Yet we know that at that time Prof. Vovsi was still at liberty and treated a female patient at the Swedish embassy here. In other words, the arrests were not all carried out at the same time.

4) I have said that an anti-Jewish action is one of the aims of the campaign. But it is not the only one. I shall cite as a latest proof the fact that [Nikolai] Mikhailov, in his keynote speech on the anniversary of Lenin's death at the ceremonial gathering at the Bolshoi, referred to the Doctors' Plot but did not mention the Joint and the accusation against an international Jewish organization. Clearer proof is the recurrent reference in all the papers to negligence on the part of the bodies responsible for the internal security system.

In other words: the possibility exists that the crux of the matter is a bitter struggle between various forces in the top echelons of the administration. Beria has for years been responsible for the country's internal security system. Until recently speculators mentioned his name and Malenkov's in the same breath. As we know, Malenkov has risen spectacularly during the last few months, and perhaps what he is now doing is getting rid once and for all of his competitor, who is now in an inferior position but who could still rise again.

5) This campaign has yet another aim, and that is: to intensify police surveillance over the population, to terrorize them, to impose a regime which would preclude the possibility of any action that might harm the powers that be.

This intention can be interpreted in various ways. Perhaps the reason is the fear that the United States may intensify the Cold War with the inauguration of the new president.[4] Perhaps many weak points were exposed in the country, necessitating a strong hand in all walks of life. We have seen signs of this in the numerous exposures of deviations and corruption mentioned at the congresses in the various republics, which preceded the 19th Party Congress, and also at the congress itself. One can not draw from this the conclusion that the

2. The reference is to V. Minaev's article, 'Sionistskie agenty amerikanskoi razvedki', published in *Novoe vremia*, 21 Jan. 1953.
3. Apparently Ralph Parker, British journalist, correspondent of the *Daily Worker* in Moscow.
4. Dwight D. Eisenhower was inaugurated as president of the US on 20 January 1953.

Soviet Union itself is planning hostilities and that what is happening now is a preparation for this war.

6) Why did they select doctors? It is difficult to find a single satisfactory answer. Some say that this is a continuation of the campaign against the intellectuals, which began a long time ago and moves from one field to another. Others say – but this we find hard to believe – that medicine in this country is at a very low level which makes the people angry and dissatisfied. And here, as with the economists in Prague, the public will accept that this vital service was headed by saboteurs, and hence its failures. Another opinion has it that, in the primitive consciousness of the Soviet population, this profession was always suspect and therefore they are capable of believing things which the entire world perceives as a shocking and most fantastic libel.

* * *

From what has been said in paragraph (2) one can, I think, draw the conclusion that as long as they have not explicitly involved Israel, we, as a state – the government, the Knesset, and the legation – must refrain from reacting. Something may possibly happen here, which would dictate a forceful reaction on our part. It is also possible that this may result in a severance of relations, or in reciprocal reduction of staff of the legations to a bare minimum. But we must not rush ahead and we have to be very circumspect about doing things which may evoke a direct attack on Israel here.

446
S.T. Bazarov and A. Shchiborin to A.Ia. Vyshinskii (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP 6, P 15, D.13, LL.149–51
Moscow, 24 January 1953
Secret

Pursuant to your resolution in response to Comrade Ershov's communication,[1] we report: The bourgeois press is reacting to the arrest of the group of treacherous doctors in the following manner:

1. An attempt is being made to cast doubt on the published facts and charges exposing the doctor–wreckers by calling them fantastic (TASS, 21 January 1953, p. 85-r). Some commentators defend the doctors arrested for murder and attempt to vindicate them and whitewash their guilt (TASS, 15 January 1953, p. 78-o; 14 January 1953). Thus the 'deputy head of the European Department of the Joint said that the Soviet accusations were a patent fantasy' (TASS, 13 January 1953, p. 56-r).

2. This report is being used for anti-Soviet propaganda by dint of allegations that the charges against the murderous doctors, many of whom are Jews, allegedly bear an antisemitic character. Thus the Viennese paper *Wienerzeitung* spreads lies about 'the persecution of Jews in the USSR', 'Soviet antisemitism' and so forth. (TASS, 15 January 1953, p. 14-o). A representative of the Israeli government demanded an immediate discussion in the [Israeli] parliament of 'the antisemitic character of the charges against the nine Soviet doctors' (TASS, 19 January 1953, p. 78-r).

3. The anti-Soviet campaign is also conducted by insinuating that all the People's Democracies have a joint plan to intensify the campaign of antisemitism. Paris radio reported: 'Observers believe that the Soviet leaders have decided to give unprecedented scope to the antisemitic campaign which began with the Prague trial, and to liquidate the last remaining Jews suspected of sympathies with the West in the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies' (TASS, 14 January 1953, p. 19-r). New York Radio made an analogous announcement: 'The present antisemitic campaign of the Kremlin, which hitherto had not extended beyond the borders of the East European satellites, has now also openly encompassed the Soviet Union itself' (TASS, 13 January 1953, p. 73-r).

4. Regarding Israel, it is to be noted that in that country the lies concerning the Soviet Union spread in the parliament and in the press about the saboteur doctors have reached fantastic dimensions. In addition, the following questions are being raised and discussed:

a) Israeli Foreign Minister Sharett again 'expressed the hope that the gates of Romania and even Russia would be opened, which would allow the Jews

1. Ershov filed a report on 24 January regarding Israeli press reactions to the Doctors' Plot. He proposed counteracting the Israeli reaction with Soviet publications in the Israeli press, including articles on the absence of antisemitism in the USSR (see AVP RF, f.089, op.6, p.15, d.13, l.4).

to emigrate to Israel' (TASS, 17 January 1953, p. 84-r). Paris radio reported on 19 January this year that the Israeli parliament 'intends to appeal for a second time to the Soviet Union to allow the emigration of Russian Jews to Israel' (TASS, p. 71-r). Sharett told the Knesset on 19 January 1953 that 'the government of Israel will continue to assert, with renewed vigour, the right of all Jews whose hearts yearn for Zion to immigrate to the State of Israel'.[2]

b) The press is also raising the question of a possible severance of relations between the USSR and Israel. For example, in connection with the publication of the article 'Zionist Agents of the American Intelligence Service', in *Novoe vremia*[3] the London newspapers *Daily Telegraph and Morning Post* wrote: 'Russia intends to break off relations with Israel soon. It is believed that this may occur after the trial and verdict on the Kremlin doctors charged with murder last week.' (TASS, 22 January 1953, p. 23-o). One should also note that on 17 January this year, Sharett declared in Calcutta that 'it would be unreasonable to sever diplomatic relations with the USSR, and we will not take the initiative on this' (TASS, 19 January 1953, p. 8-o).

c) Israeli statesmen threaten to raise the question of 'antisemitism in the USSR and the People's Democracies' in the UN. Sharett told the Knesset on 19 January 1953, 'The government of Israel will condemn, at the UN and from any other platform, the incitement being conducted by the communist countries against the Jewish people and the vilification of its authorized organizations, and will sound the alarm for the danger that threatens the well-being of millions of Jews in these countries.' Eban, the Israeli representative at the UN, said that his delegation would raise in the UN 'the issue of the trial in Czechoslovakia' and 'the consequences of antisemitism and the campaign conducted against Israel in certain countries', with the proviso that this would not become the subject of an official complaint, but would be raised during the discussion of US interference in the internal affairs of other states (item 71 of the UN General Assembly's agenda; TASS, 15. January 1953, p. 27-o). The latest reports from Comrade Ershov have emphasized that in the Israeli press coverage of the Knesset debate on 19 January of this year, Sharett's threat to raise the issue of 'antisemitism' at the UN was not discussed at all. In this connection, the Near and Middle East Department considers it expedient at present: 1) to instruct the Press Department to publish an article in a central newspaper rebutting those who defend the murderous doctors; 2) to instruct our representatives in the People's Democracies to prepare factual materials about the hostile activities of Zionist organizations in the event that the question of the saboteur doctors is raised in the UN.

We consider it undesirable to take any diplomatic steps with regard to Israel in connection with Sharett's speech and those of other Israeli politicians in the Knesset as it is not yet clear how far the government of Israel will go. In our

---

2. See Editorial Note, pp. 854–5.
3. See Doc. 445 and n. 2 there.

view, we would do better to wait and see the outcome of the current hubbub in Israel.

As regards our position, in case the issue is raised in one form or another at the Seventh Session of the UN General Assembly which is due to resume in February, we ask for permission to submit proposals later, after receiving the additional materials necessary to prepare the matter.

S. Bazarov
A. Shchiborin

447
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/6
Moscow, 28 January 1953

To Sharett. I was astounded by the publication of the Moscow photograph of Golda [Meyerson] in *Dvar hashavua*.[1] This will enable [the Russians] to blame the legation for illicit relations here and for organizing the crowd at that time. I am greatly worried by the whole tenor of the speeches and articles in Israel and by Eban's statements in the US. They all create the impression of provoking the USSR and of a desire to arrive at a show-down with them. All this contradicts your No. 78, para. 7.[2] I deeply regret that you have not considered it appropriate to ask my opinion about the style of our public appearances and publications.[3]

---

1. The cover of *Dvar hashavua* (*Davar's* weekend magazine) of 22 January 1953 carried a picture of a throng of Jews surrounding Israeli diplomat Golda Meyerson outside Moscow's Choral Synagogue during the High Holidays of October 1948.
2. See Doc. 442 and n. 1 there.
3. In his reply, Sharett wrote Eliashiv that his apprehensions were exaggerated and that he apparently had not correctly gauged the intensity of the storm brewing in Israel and the depth of concern for the fate of Soviet Jewry. Having been unable to consult Eliashiv before his statement in the Knesset, he now asked Eliashiv's opinion on the proposal to hold a world Jewish protest conference and to raise the issue at the second meeting of the Seventh Session of the UN General Assembly.

   Eliashiv rejected Sharett's explanations and repeated his assertion that publication of the photograph paved the way for the claim that Israel was involved in espionage and endangered the lives of people who appeared in the photo. In his opinion, Israel's representatives should restrain their emotions and not allow themselves to be carried away by the public mood. He warned against accelerating the deterioration in relations with the USSR. If Israel had something to say to the Soviet authorities, it should do so directly and not by spontaneous declarations in various corners of the globe (see exchange of telegrams between Sharett and Eliashiv, 30 Jan. 1953, ISA 130.09/2325/5; 2 Feb. 1953, ISA 130.09/2325/6).

448
A. Levavi to W. Eytan (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2512/27
Tel Aviv, 29 January 1953
Secret

RE: THE ATTITUDE OF THE COMMUNISTS TOWARDS ISRAEL AND ARGUMENTS ON THE POLICY OF THE WEST TOWARDS THE ARABS AS REGARDS THE DEFENCE OF THE MIDDLE EAST

The opinion prevails that the shift in Soviet policy regarding Israel necessarily weakens our position vis-à-vis the West. Thus, communist policy demonstrates now that Israel has no alternative but to side with the West, while the Arabs are free to manoeuvre and the West is therefore obliged to appease them in order to prevent the spread of communist influence among them. I think that this thesis is open to argument from many aspects:

a) Israel's economic dependence on the West was well known before the initiation of the latest stage in communist policy against the Jews and Israel.

b) It is a fact that the Soviet Union has not launched any propaganda campaign among the Arabs in the context of their hatred of Israel. This, by the way, is one of the reasons why the Department of State does not attach any importance to the 'Arab aspect' of the outburst of Soviet enmity towards us. This position of the Americans and also of the British has become clear from diplomatic contacts with them during the last few weeks.

c) If, for example, they had approached King Faruq of Egypt during World War II and warned him: if you do not assist us, then Rommel will invade your country, he probably would have thought: so what? I'll manage with Rommel no worse than with Montgomery. Such an assumption would not have been fundamentally unreasonable in that context. Therefore, it would have been acceptable to many Arab leaders.

This will not be the situation in case of a possible third world war. No Arab ruler, nor any leader who might attain a position of power by his own efforts in the foreseeable future, could have any illusions as to his fate in the case of a Soviet takeover. The West must exploit this and tell the Arab leaders: if you do not cooperate with us right now and permit us make the necessary preparations, your country will find itself under Soviet occupation in the event of a war.

d) While Israel has been economically dependent on the West from the outset, considerable influence has been exercised here (particularly in circles that are important socially and professionally and among the young and the politically aware) by communist, pro-communist and neutralist ideologies. The country's leadership is conducting a struggle against these influences with growing success.

Soviet hatred of the Jewish people, which has now become overt, has fundamentally undermined these ideological influences in Israel. The change of attitudes in Israel following this exposure of Soviet enmity could now strengthen the entire people of Israel – apart from an insignificant minority – in their readiness to defend democracy actively, loyally and courageously.

This spiritual development could be delayed, or even change direction, only in one eventuality: if the Western policy of favouring the Arabs at Israel's expense in connection with reinforcing of [Western] military power in the Middle East and the organization of regional defence leads to situations which would be interpreted by large parts of the Israeli public as endangering Israel's security and independence. In such a case, Israel could certainly become neutral.

The communists and their allies surely know how to invent, in such circumstances, effective propagandistic stratagems to intensify the feelings of disappointment, bitterness and neutralism among Israel's public.

While there are no important elements among the ruling circles in the Arab states which could be convinced by the communists that they might be able to arrive at a compromise with them, it is within the realm of possibility that the widespread feeling of disappointment with the West [in Israel] would lead political elements of some importance and capability to believe in the illusion that the communist hatred of Israel was a passing phenomenon and that it may be entirely possible to reach an agreement with the Soviet Union which would not impair the chances of these political forces attaining a position of dominance.

e) Appeasement of the Arabs by the West could hinder the present desirable development of the attitude of the public in Israel. However, the strengthening of Israel, on the one hand, and the Soviet danger, on the other, could bring the Arab leaders to understand that the system of blackmailing the West has led them down a blind alley, and that now is the time for them to abandon perforce their traditional policy and to undertake explicitly to support the main forces of democratic defence, since continuing the rejectionist bluff will result in their loss and not in further gain.

f) The important differences between Persia and the Arabs should not be ignored. There is no movement in the Arab states analogous to the Tudeh, an organized communist movement with substantial influence over the masses. There are no prospects of such a movement appearing [in the Arab states] in the foreseeable future, unless it is as a result of substantial Soviet conquests in the Middle East.

g) It is an illusion to attempt to achieve internal stability in Egypt or Syria at the price of acquiescing to the furthering of instability in the region by those Arab leaders who wish to consolidate their rule in their own countries. The very existence of this instability, the absence of peace between Israel and the Arabs, undermines the stability of the Arab regimes in their own countries. The competition between opposition and government in both Egypt and Syria in extremist anti-Israeli nationalism will drive the Arab rulers to frequent

anti-Israeli acts and demands. Every concession in this regard by the West necessarily contains the seeds of new Arab demands or claims. As long as there is no fundamental solution to the problem, this will be a vicious circle – or rather a dangerous spiral constantly escalating the degree and seriousness of the danger.

This chronic disease is also malignant, and must be treated surgically. This goes for the settlement of the refugees in Arab lands, and it also goes for the issue of peace between Israel and the Arabs.

If, during this process, a dictatorial regime like that of Shishakli[1] collapses, there is no practical possibility of its being replaced in Syria by a regime which, by its social and political character, would be closer to the Soviet Union. On the other hand, if the Arab leadership becomes convinced that the West will not submit to its extortion and will not favour them against Israel in the military and military-political spheres, that their intransigence does not prevent the West from initiating practical actions for the defence of the region in the interest of world democracy, from reaching bilateral agreements with those who are willing to assist in this defence, and from strengthening Israel by providing it with military aid – then the liberating crisis in the consciousness of the Arab leaders will, and the way will be laid open for creating genuine stability in the region and in each of the Arab countries through the settlement of the refugees, the establishment of peace between Israel and the Arabs, economic aid for social progress in the Arab states, military aid to the countries of the Middle East and the formation, together with the democratic powers, of a defensive front against dangers from without.

Only realistic recognition of the lack of an alternative and of the lack of any prospect of an alternative will make the Arab states choose this road, and the sooner the better. The West will have to adopt this line in any case before a favourable settlement is reached in the Middle East; and any delay because of fears or illusions may result in the opportunity being missed.

* * *

I do not presume to claim that the above exhausts all aspects of the problems. Various assumptions may be disputed and factors I have missed may be indicated. I think, too, that I have included ideas to which we may find it convenient to give expression on appropriate occasions in diplomatic negotiations with the West, and in particular with foreign personalities and representatives. Possibly, if we put forward such considerations, even if it is done in an unassertive way and as a matter for speculation – we shall be pointing to that aspect of the situation which is often overlooked by Western statesmen. We shall restore the balance where necessary and work for the creation of an conceptual political climate more favourable for dealing with our various concrete aspirations in this sphere.

1. Adib Shishakli, Syrian deputy chief of staff and de facto ruler of the country from November 1951; president of Syria from June 1953 to February 1954.

449
Excerpt from the Political Report of the USSR Legation in Israel

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP 6, P.15, D.8, LL.32–5
Tel Aviv, 31 January 1953

[...][1]

The attitude of the Arab states towards Israel remains hostile. In recent declarations official representatives of the Arab states have confirmed their readiness to abide by the Arab League's decision on the boycott of trade with West Germany if it ratifies its agreement with Israel.[2] There are also a number of opponents of the agreement among West German industrialists and traders. The Adenauer government, in its attempts to find a solution, has offered the Arab countries trade agreements based on Most-Favoured-Nation status and has agreed to UN control over deliveries to Israel in accordance with the reparations treaty. Finally, as reported on 24 December, Adenauer said: 'We will not resist if the UN decides to give some of the reparations to Arab refugees.' Negotiations between West Germany and Egypt, at which reparations are also being discussed, have already been going on for some time.

In connection with the trial in Prague of the group of plotters, spies and saboteurs headed by Slansky,[3] the Israeli government has tried to foment an unprecedented anti-Soviet campaign throughout the country. All the facts cited in court, in particular those concerning the so-called Morgenthau Plan,[4] have been denied in the press. However, the United Press Agency confirmed on 1 December 1952 that Ben-Gurion and Sharett were indeed in the US when Acheson was secretary of state. A frenzied hysteria has been unleashed in the press over the alleged campaign of antisemitism in the People's Democracies – such were the attempts of the Israeli government and press to misrepresent the trial of this gang of traitors to the Czechoslovak people. Sharett set the tone in this campaign by making a speech in the Knesset on 24 November 1952 including vicious and slanderous allegations about the Prague trial. This whole flood of lies and accusations of antisemitism directed against the USSR was necessary to mask the acts of espionage and sabotage carried out by the imperialist camp and its Israeli agents in the People's Democracies.

---

1. Excerpt consisting of the last 4 pages of a 34-page report.
2. On the Arab pressure upon West Germany with regard to the reparations treaty, see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel,* Vol. 7, pp. 679, 699–701.
3. See Doc. 436, n. 1.
4. In a telegram to Israeli missions abroad dated 23 November 1952, the director general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Walter Eytan, wrote on the Slansky trial: 'Following the pattern of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion,* the trial charge speaks about a secret meeting in the White House in 1947, in which Truman, Acheson, Ben-Gurion, Sharett and Morgenthau took part and in which the 'Morgenthau Plan' was drafted. According to this plan, the United States would support Israel upon its establishment and the Zionists, in turn, would carry out espionage and establish subversive groups within the Soviet bloc' (*Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel,* Vol 7, p. 659).

The Israeli bourgeoisie unanimously joined in the slanderous allegations by the Israeli government about 'the existence of antisemitism' in the USSR, while realizing the mendacity of this sort of declaration. The reactionary American Rabbi Silver, for example, said: 'I can not believe that, allegedly, antisemitism was a factor in the Prague trial' (*Kol Haam*, 22 December 1952). All the Israeli parties, except the communists, are taking part in fanning anti-Soviet hysteria, which resulted in the explosion of a bomb at the Czechoslovak mission on 4 December, the burning of a Soviet car near the USSR legation building on 8 December 1952, and, finally, the arson at the Soviet bookshop in Jerusalem on 15 January 1953.[5]

A new stage in anti-Soviet hysteria began with the publication in the Soviet press on 13 January of the official report exposing the group of doctors who conducted terror, by medical means, against the leaders of the party and government and Soviet army commanders. The fact that some of these criminals are Jewish served as a pretext for vicious attacks on the USSR. On 19 January 1953 there was a special session of the Knesset in connection with the so-called 'anti-Jewish campaign' in the USSR. Argov, the representative of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, opened the debate by saying: 'Today's trumped-up charges against the seven Jewish doctors is bound to be met with firm protest not only because they are lies, but also because they could lead to the extermination of the two million Jews who live under Kremlin rule.' At the same session, Sharett made a new anti-Soviet declaration, whereby, juggling such terms as 'fabrication', 'the anti-Jewish policy officially adopted by the USSR', 'the campaign of atrocities, propaganda and terror conducted by the Soviet authorities against their Jewish citizens', and so forth, he came to the defence of the criminals and the organizations on behalf of whom they were acting. Sharett repeated the allegations about the persecution of the Jews in the USSR and concluded with a demand that Jews be allowed to emigrate to Israel.

The objectives of this new anti-Soviet campaign are as follows:

1) to convince the US, and particularly the new Republican administration, that the government of Israel is firmly on the side of the US and that they can fully rely on its support in the execution of their aggressive plans in the Near and Middle East, and can continue to use Israel as a centre of espionage in the countries of the socialist camp.

2) to increase the activity of American Jews in fund-raising and other forms of assistance to Israel. The demand for Jewish emigration from the USSR under circumstances in which immigration to Israel is being reduced because of economic difficulties, is merely demagogic, and is calculated to reinforce Israeli requests for 'assistance'.

---

5. See Docs. 436 and 437 and AVP RF, f.059, op.28, p.57, d.346, l.279.

3) to strengthen the quite shaky position of the Mapai Party in Israel and to represent it as the chief advocate of the Jews and the chief fighter for Zionism and immigration.

4) to divert the attention of the Israeli population from the economic difficulties, which have recently increased markedly.

5) to use the increased nationalist feeling in the country in order to intensify the attack on the rights of labour, progressive organizations and above all the Communist Party of Israel.[6]

USSR Minister in Israel
P. Ershov

450
Report on VOKS Activities in Israel

COPY: GARF, F.5283, OP.22C, D.614, LL.57–61
[January 1953][1]
Secret

In 1952 VOKS activities in Israel were conducted through the VOKS representative and the Israeli League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

In 1952 the league's activities were carried out in extremely difficult conditions. The ruling circles of Israel, hirelings of American imperialism, instigated vile anti-Soviet propaganda, hounded the league in the press and obstructed its work in every way. During the whole year, the league did not have its own premises, and many of its activities were frustrated. Rabid enemies of the Soviet people – Zionists who infiltrated the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR and its governing bodies – thoroughly undermined its work from within.

There was particular resistance to attempts by the progressive sections of the league to carry on its work among the masses. According to the VOKS representative, the right-wing Mapam leaders, who carry considerable weight in their party, simply sabotaged mass-oriented activities of the league in general and those of its local branches in particular.

Nevertheless, despite the attempts by the agents of Zionism to obstruct the work of the league, in 1952, according to the VOKS representative in Israel, the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR managed to organize a number of activities.

Doc. 449
6. Sent to Vyshinskii, Near and Middle East Department and Comrade Tugarinov.

Doc. 450
1. This document bears no date, but was apparently written in late January 1953.

These included:

I. celebration of important Soviet holidays and anniversaries;
II. mounting of VOKS photographic exhibitions;
III. screening of Soviet films;
IV. publication of the magazine *Israel–USSR* and other publishing activities;
V. lectures;
VI. Russian language study in special groups.

Celebration of important Soviet holidays and anniversaries.

1. In 1952 the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR marked the 34th anniversary of the Soviet army. Festive gatherings were held in Tel Aviv, Haifa, Jerusalem, Jaffa, Ramat Gan, Rishon Lezion and other cities, as well as in many agricultural settlements in Israel. After the ceremonial proceedings, Soviet films were screened, and there were amateur concerts featuring Soviet songs and music. Several thousand Israeli workers took part in these gatherings.

2. In May 1952 the league organized several ceremonial gatherings to mark the seventh anniversary of the victory over fascist Germany. The most notable event in this connection was the mass ceremony at the Soviet army monument in the Jerusalem hills (10 May 1952), in which about 5,000 people took part.

Celebration of the tenth anniversary of the League for Friendly Relations with the USSR.

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the founding of the league in Israel, a large number of festive gatherings were held in various cities and rural settlements. These included Tel Aviv (2,000 people), Haifa (800 people), Ramat Gan, Jerusalem, Lydda, Safed, Migdal Gad,[2] Sala[me],[3] Beit Dagon and other towns and settlements.

Mounting of VOKS photographic exhibitions.

VOKS photographic exhibitions were usually accompanied by various events: lectures and reports, Soviet films and concerts of recorded Soviet music and songs.

In 1952 the league organized the following photographic exhibitions:

1. From 26 April until 17 May in Haifa a photographic exhibition was displayed featuring Stalin's great construction projects for communism.[4] About 2,000 people visited it. Along with the exhibition there was a musical evening, an evening of recorded Soviet music and a screening of the Soviet films *Popov*,

2. Formerly the Arab town of Majdal, it was resettled by Jewish immigrants after the 1948 War and in 1955 became part of Ashkelon.
3. The former Arab village Salame, now a part of Tel Aviv.
4. Initiated by Stalin in the second half of 1950, they comprised construction of a number of hydroelectric power stations, including the Kuibyshev and Stalingrad stations on the Volga, the Kakhovskii on the Dnieper, the Main Turkmen Canal Amu Darya-Krasnovodsk, the Volga-Don Canal and other smaller projects.

A Lucky Encounter and *The Youth Festival.* The exhibition received good reviews in the progressive Israeli press (e.g., in the newspaper *Al hamishmar* of 18 May 1952).

2. On 18 April 1952 an exhibition on Soviet trade unions was opened in Rehovot. It had earlier been displayed in other Israeli cities.

3. In November 1952, to mark the opening of the club of the league's Tel Aviv branch, two exhibitions, entitled 'The Soviet Book' and 'Soviet Graphic Art', were held on the premises of the club.

Publishing activity of the league.

In 1952 the league published only one issue of the magazine *Israel–USSR*, with a circulation of 3,000 copies. In addition, it published a Hebrew translation of the following works by Stalin: *On Dialectical and Historical Materialism* (3,000 copies) and *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR* (ca. 5,000 copies), as well as a booklet by Comrade L.P. Beria on the 34th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

In 1952 the league published 2,000 copies of a Hebrew translation of 'A New Year *Feuilleton*', from the first 1952 issue of *New Times.* The leaflet came out on 8 February 1952. As is well known, the *feuilleton* exposed US plans for war, as revealed in the American magazine *Colliers.* The League for Friendly Relations with the USSR utilized the occasion of this publication to organize demonstrations in support of peace in various cities of Israel.

Early in October 1952 the league published a Hebrew translation of Nikolaeva's novel *The Harvest.*[5]

No other activities have been reported by the VOKS representative. It should be noted that information from the representative does not arrive systematically and does not fully reflect the state of the league's activities and organization. Despite repeated inquiries from the department, the representative has not yet provided answers to a number of extremely important questions relating to the league's work.

In 1952 the department sent the league a selection of background material, equipment and literature (see appendix). The representative has not reported on the utilization of this material.

Analyst in the Near and Middle East Department of VOKS
R. Arutiunov

Appendices:[6]
1. A list of material sent to the VOKS representative in Israel in 1952
2. Information on the league's magazine *Israel–USSR*

5. See Doc. 435, n. 1.
6. Not traced.

451
M. Sharett to the Israeli Embassy in Washington

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2309/12
Tel Aviv, 2 February 1953

Here are my instructions in the matter of Moscow's calumnies

(a) This is not a major line of policy but the result of a general trend to strengthen the regime whether for its own sake or in preparation for war, by means of blood–letting, tightening internal espionage, targeting a scapegoat and laying the groundwork for the mass liquidation of unreliable elements.

(b) Even if for Moscow the libel is of secondary importance, for us it is the crux of the matter.

(c) The libel is the outcome of a deliberate decision, and we should expect more such manifestations and prepare for a prolonged campaign.

(d) We have very few weapons in hand and we should not underestimate the [importance of] arousing public opinion constantly and repeatedly, on the assumption that Moscow is not entirely indifferent to the repercussions of its policy in international public opinion and its influence on people and circles sympathetic to it.

(e) We should not rely on the facts themselves to maintain the level of public tension; we must constantly incite it.

Therefore, I favoured from the beginning the initiative for a world Jewish conference to react to the calumnies. This is now the government's stance.[1] The conference should be convened in Paris for greater resonance in Europe. The government of Israel will not participate in either the initiative or the debates but will send an observer. The conference of the organizations for reparations[2] can serve as a precedent for the composition which should be as broad as possible. The aims of the conference: (1) condemnation and refutation of the calumny in a well-considered, dignified and forceful manner; (2) unification of Jewish public opinion and isolation of the enemies of the Jewish people;[3] (3) an appeal to world public opinion; (4) Let My People Go.

The conference will not go beyond the bounds of demanding rectification of the slander of the Jewish people and its organizations, [voicing] its concern for the safety of the Jewish masses, their protection and the demand for their *aliya,* the denunciation of hatred of the Jewish people and an appeal to the world to rise up against it. It will not condemn communism as a regime and will not overtly join the political war against the Soviet Union. Those who see

1. At the government meeting of 1 February 1953, Sharett presented his arguments in favour of a conference of world Jewry and requested government approval. Interior Minister Yisrael Rokah proposed that the government not take a decision on this matter or adopt an initiative, but merely take note of the foreign minister's announcement. Sharett agreed, adding that this allowed it to be understood that the government position was favourable.
2. Reference is to a conference of Jewish organizations that took place in New York in October 1951 in anticipation of the reparations negotiations with Germany.
3. In Hebrew, literally, 'those who pronounce sentence on the Covenant'.

in that war the be all and end all must understand the importance of the conference's contribution to it precisely in its show of self-restraint as a free and independent expression of the feelings of the Jewish people rather than as a show orchestrated, as it were, by people behind the scenes.

The conference can take place only with the massive participation of American Jewry. It appears that it is Zionist opinions that are divided. [Nahum] Goldmann and [Berl] Locker, due to arrive this week, will deal with this issue.[4] It is important that the embassy take part in the internal consultations in order to define the government's stand and to influence and guide things in the above sense. You may show this telegram to the heads of the Jewish Agency.

Sharett

452
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.30, P.53, D.311, LL.45–6.
Tel Aviv, 9 February 1953

At 22.35 on 9 February a powerful bomb exploded on the grounds of the legation. All the glass windows were shattered as well as the window frames and the doors on the ground floor and first floor and some on the second floor. The wives of the minister and superintendent and the chauffeur Grishin were seriously injured; they were taken to hospital by ambulance. The legation building was damaged. The policeman on duty tried to call the police but could not get through. The police and the ambulance were summoned by the minister. Levavi, the deputy director-general of the Foreign Ministry, and Bentsur, the head of the East European Division, arrived within half an hour. They tried to offer their regrets, but I did not accept their apologies and said that the explosion was a result of systematic anti-Soviet campaign and the purely perfunctory protection of the legation installed after the legation's car had been set on fire in December 1952.

In the buildings next to the legation the windows and doors were also smashed. The Swiss minister, who lives directly opposite, at a distance of at least 50 metres, came over to report that the glass windows in his legation had also been broken. It has been established that the saboteurs gained access to the legation's grounds by using shears to cut an opening in the wire netting which protects it.

This act of terror and sabotage against the Soviet legation in Israel is a result of the anti-Soviet campaign that has recently been conducted by the Israeli government.

---

4. On 17 February, the Jewish Agency Executive in Jerusalem invited Jewish organizations to attend a conference to be held in Zurich from 10–12 March 1953, under the slogan, 'Let My People Go'. After Stalin's death on 5 March, it was decided to postpone and, ultimately, to cancel the conference.

I ask for your permission to visit Sharett tomorrow and express an extremely stern and decisive protest. I think that after this incident we should break off diplomatic relations with the government of Israel.

Please reply immediately by telegram.[1]

Ershov

453
Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the USSR Legation in Israel

COPY: ISA 130.11/2507/7
Tel Aviv, 10 February 1953

The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs pays its compliments to the legation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and begs to bring to its attention the following:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1. Extends to the legation of the Soviet Union the deep regrets and apologies of the government of Israel for the vile crime which was perpetrated last night against the legation, its staff and its residence.

2. Declares the readiness of the government of Israel to pay compensation for the injuries and the severe damage caused.

3. Informs the legation that the following statement was published last night by the government of Israel:

> The government expresses its horror and revulsion at the criminal attack perpetrated tonight against the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv. Every decent citizen abhors this insane act which has harmed not only a foreign diplomatic mission but also the very soul of the state itself. Every effort will be made to expose the malefactors and once exposed they will be brought to justice immediately and duly punished. The government expresses its deep sorrow and regrets to the minister of the Soviet Union and to the staff of the legation, and in particular to those who have been injured and who are now receiving medical treatment.

4. Requests the legation to permit police experts to examine the site of the explosion in the legation courtyard as soon as possible, in the hope of finding some fragments or other clues which will facilitate the exposure of the criminals who perpetrated this despicable act against the legation.[1]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs takes this opportunity to convey again to the legation its deepest respects.

Doc. 452

1. In two telegrams sent the following day Ershov recommended that Ben-Gurion's Knesset speech of 10 Feb. 1953 be referred to in the Soviet note or statement and that if the severance of Soviet-Israeli relations appeared inopportune, the minister, the counsellor and the first secretary be recalled (AVP RF, f.059, op.30, p.53, d.311, ll.51–6).

Doc. 453

1. No permission for expert police investigation of the site of the explosion was granted by the legation staff (see Doc. 455).

454
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

COPY: ISA 130.02/2457/14B
Moscow, 10 February 1953
Top Secret

THE DOCTORS' PLOT AND THE QUESTION OF VIGILANCE

1. Almost a month has passed since the day, 13 January, when the accusation against the doctors was made public. Nothing has changed substantially – no information has been given to the public about the investigation, or about new evidence or suspects. The press has only mentioned, in connection with the anniversary of Kuibyshev's death, that both he and Menzhinskii[1] had died at the hands of criminal doctors. But the press does not let the matter rest and it refers to the affair on every possible occasion and keeps mentioning the doctors, the Joint and the Zionists. Sometimes the same sentences and sometimes entire paragraphs appear word for word in speeches and in different articles.

2. Zionism and the Joint have become infamous; there is no need to add the adjectives 'Jewish' or 'Zionist' when referring to the Joint. The word 'Jewish' is used not only for the Joint as an organization but also for people in the state itself who are assumed to be its agents, namely 'nationalistic bourgeois Jews'. You will find details in [Yehuda] Gideon's review of the press. The recurring motif in all these articles and speeches is that there are many potential enemies outside, and that there are still hostile elements, survivors from the past, in the state itself who carry out the orders of the enemies from outside.

The State of Israel has not, so far, become a target for these accusations. It has not yet been said that it interferes in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union, as was stated explicitly in Czechoslovakia and Poland.[2] Here and there you will find some derogatory expressions in the press about our heads of state, but there is nothing new in this. On the other hand, Zionism and the Zionists are being vigorously attacked. It is very seldom that articles from *Novoe vremia* are reprinted in the local press, yet Minaev's slanderous articles[3] appeared in many, perhaps in all, the papers of the various republics. This alone shows the importance that is being accorded here to the attack on Zionism.

---

1. According to official Soviet accounts, Valeriian Kuibyshev, head of the State Planning Committee (Goldsplan), and Viacheslav Menzhinskii, head of the Secret Police, were both poisoned by rightist-Trotskyist gangs in the mid-1930s.
2. Arye L. Kubovy, Israel's minister in Czechoslovakia and Poland, had been declared *persona non grata* at the beginning of December 1952 on these grounds.
3. See Doc. 445 and n. 2 there.

3. The affair of the doctors, the Joint and Zionism is interwoven with a more wide-ranging issue – the call for vigilance in all walks of life and vigorous attacks aimed at various targets. An ideological campaign against nationalist trends in the various republics has been taking place for a long time now, and I have drawn attention in numerous letters to the campaign against literature and [literary] criticism. This campaign has now exceeded the bounds of ideological controversy and dogmatism in cultural life. The nationalists in the various republics are now included in a general attack on the enemies within and in the call for vigilance. This has so far taken place with regard to the Ukrainian and Lithuanian nationalists, and in both cases these have been mentioned in the same breath with the nationalist bourgeois Jews.

4. In other spheres as well, in which the ideological campaign against heretical views and theories has been taking place for a long time now, this campaign has now taken on a more concrete character and those attacked are accused of more serious crimes than ideological deviations. The economists are now being accused of having taught that the outside world's offensive against this state where socialism is being realized has abated, and thus contributed to the decrease of vigilance while, according to the official theory, it is precisely when socialism is about to conquer and be realized that the enemies abroad and their accessories inside will intensify their campaign against the Soviet Union and its regime. In this connection they mention Bukharin, who preached complacency, and have resurrected from their archives the epithet 'Bukharinists', which they began to apply, together with the other pejoratives, to traitors of all kinds.

5. In some fields, like law and philosophy, the campaign is still being conducted on the ideological plane and only in the form of acrimonious disputes with heretical thinkers. But it will come as no surprise if representatives of these scientific disciplines are involved in the general campaign and the pursuit of criminals and if in their teachings, too, links are found with those who sinned by intent or by lack of vigilance.

6. There is a steadily growing stream of publications about thefts, embezzlement, fraud and forgery in various corners of this great land. There is not a single newspaper that does not publish items on these acts, and there is not a single day when you do not read about such an act in a newspaper. There is nothing new in publications of this sort. They have always been appearing in the press. The novelty is first of all – in the quantity. And two more things. The names of the transgressors are now always included in the articles and reports. While in the past isolated Jewish names appeared among the many non-Jewish ones – and then I warned against generalizations and exaggerations – we have noticed lately that the number of Jews stigmatized in these reports is steadily growing in the press of the various republics, mainly those with a large Jewish population – like the Ukraine, Belorussia and Moldavia. The Moscow press was at first more cautious and the Jewish names did not stand out, but there has been a change also in the mainstream press –

Jewish names appear there frequently, and in cases where the family name is not characteristically [Jewish] the person's first name and his patronymic are added so that the reader can make no mistake.

It should also be noted that in these reports on swindlers and crooks the accent lately has been not on people from the economic sector who embezzled public property but on intellectuals, doctors and professors who work in these fields without having formal certification or who forged such documents. Here the Jewish names are most frequent. This may be seen as intensification of the vigilance and search for miscreants especially among intellectuals, and one may speculate that this sector has been so vigorously treated because it affords more opportunities to stigmatize Jewish names.

7. And one more thing. We have already cabled you that, in a long article in *Pravda*, extensive publicity was given to one S.D. Gurevich who was arrested as a spy and saboteur, and who had been brought up in the home of a Bundist-Menshevik. This man is known here. He worked in the past as a clerk for American news agencies, and also, quite openly, did journalistic work for the Soviet [press], having been editor of the journal *Za rubezhom*. The 'Bundist–Menshevik' in whose home he had been brought up, Lipetz, who went over to the communists in 1918, changed his name to Petrovskii and was liquidated in the Great Purges. The article on Gurevich was published in full also in *Pravda Ukrainy*, in other words, great importance is being accorded to this case.

He may serve as a link with foreign correspondents, and at his trial he may 'disclose' all sorts of things about them. Perhaps he will be the man who will 'report' on the American embassy. It is also possible that they are looking for additional links leading to the remnants of Jewish communal life in the early Soviet Union, and from Gurevich the line will lead to various people who were once members of the Bund.

Sh. Eliashiv

455
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.089, OP.30, P.53, D.311, LL.56–60
Tel Aviv, 10 February 1953

Yesterday Prime Minister Ben-Gurion made the following statement in parliament:

> It is with the greatest regret that I must inform the Knesset about the base act perpetrated in Israel last night, that is, the explosion in the courtyard of the Soviet legation, which caused damage to the building and injured some members of the legation, including Mrs. Ershov, the minister's wife (who was slightly injured), the wife of a legation employee (who suffered more serious injuries) and the legation chauffeur. All three were immediately taken to hospital, where they were given medical treatment, and the minister's wife was released shortly afterwards. On behalf of the government I express our sincere wishes for the speedy recovery of those who suffered injuries, and I am sure that the Knesset and the people of Israel join us in expressing these feelings.
>
> The premises of several legations, including the Soviet legation, are guarded by the police, but the courtyard which was the scene of yesterday's explosion is guarded by the legation itself. Although the government had offered police protection there as well, the offer was not acceptable to the legation, and consequently the Israeli security services had no access to the courtyard. Immediately after the explosion, high-ranking police officers arrived [at the scene of the incident]. Mr. Ershov showed them what had happened in the courtyard and in the building, but he did not permit the police experts to investigate immediately whether there were fragments of explosives in the courtyard or traces of those responsible for the crime.
>
> The police investigation was not, of course, halted and will continue with maximum vigour. (Ben-Gurion then read out the diplomatic note from the Israeli Foreign Ministry.)[1] After receiving this note, the Soviet minister agreed this morning to allow experts to examine the site of the explosion.
>
> Further to the note of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, I consider it my duty to make the following declaration to the people of the country:
>
> The hooligans who committed this heinous crime are greater enemies of the State of Israel than of any foreign state.
>
> If the motive for their foul deed was Jewish patriotism, and their intention was to fight for the honour of Israel, then allow me to say that it is they who through this senseless crime, have defiled Israel's honour.
>
> The State of Israel maintains and will continue to maintain normal relations with all peace-loving nations. The missions of states, large and small alike, which are accredited to us, enjoy a special status of honour, security and privilege among us not only by virtue of international and Israeli law and custom, but also because they are the guests of the nation and the state. He who harms them harms, first and foremost, the honour and prestige of the State of Israel.

1. Doc. 453.

> Our state is founded on the rule of law, and only the responsibly chosen representatives of the state can determine its domestic and foreign relations. The criminal and evil deed perpetrated yesterday in the courtyard of the legation undermines the sovereignty of the State of Israel and besmirches the honour of the Jewish nation.
>
> We can not disregard the fact that the reprehensible crime committed yesterday in the courtyard of the Soviet legation is not the first of its kind. Criminals placed a bomb in the house of a minister in the Israeli government, the late [David] Pinkas. Afterwards, there was an attempt to place a time-bomb in the Israeli Foreign Ministry; and now a bomb was thrown in the legation of a powerful state with which Israel has maintained normal relations almost from the day it was established.
>
> The government considers it its duty to do all it can to discover the sources of crimes that threaten the security of the state and to eradicate these acts of violence directed both within and without.
>
> At the present moment we must let the police carry out its searches and investigations so that the criminals are found, tried and punished with the full severity of the law.

After Ben-Gurion's speech Sprinzak, chairman of the Knesset, read out a declaration on behalf of the Knesset:

> The entire Knesset is united in its condemnation of this barbaric act and regards the perpetrators of this revolting deed as savages with no sense of national responsibility or civic consciousness.
>
> The Knesset expresses its deep sorrow over the incident and wishes the minister's wife and the injured members of the legation a full and speedy recovery.[2]

Communist Party representative Wilner demanded a parliamentary discussion of Ben-Gurion's declaration, but the chairman refused the request and did not give him the floor.

The parliamentary [Knesset] Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, according to the newspaper *The Jerusalem Post*, 'called on the government to do everything in its power to find the criminals and recommended that security measures for the protection of foreign missions in Israel be increased'.

Two issues deriving from Ben-Gurion's statement should be noted:

1) Neither the government, nor the Ministry of Foreign Affairs nor the police department raised the question of guarding the legation's courtyard. Policemen on duty occasionally made an unauthorized entry into the legation grounds and checked the papers of visitors. This was why, with permission from the Centre, we approached the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The police could guard the building from two other sides as well, without being on the

2. For Ben-Gurion's statement, and the short exchanges that took place afterwards, see *Divrei haknesset*, Vol. XIII, pp. 682–3.

territory of the legation, but instead of keeping guard, they kept a record of our visitors. Ben-Gurion's statement is an obvious attempt to absolve his government from responsibility for this act of sabotage.

2) After we had called the police, I received two officers and showed them the scene of the incident and part of the damage, but did not allow the entry of several persons in plain clothes who introduced themselves as secret police agents. This enabled Ben-Gurion to claim that I did not permit the 'experts' to conduct an investigation. Ben Gurion's statement is an attempt to exonerate the government a priori if the criminals are not arrested, which is quite possible. In our note about the bombing, we should deal with these attempts by Ben-Gurion to absolve the government of responsibility for the attack on the legation.

Ershov

456
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.30, P.53, D.311, L.54
Tel Aviv, 10 February 1953

On the evening of 10 February, I received the following letter from the President of Israel:

> Dear Mr. Ershov,
>
> I was extremely shaken by the news about the criminal attack by unidentified persons on the legation of the USSR – an attack that resulted in injuries to three members of the legation, including Mrs. Ershov.
>
> The government of Israel has condemned this vile criminal deed and has said that it is taking all necessary measures to expose and punish the criminals.
>
> I look upon every terrorist action of this kind as a loathsome deed threatening the lives of public figures who are the representatives of friendly governments performing their duties faithfully. I look upon this action as a demoralizing and criminal act directed against the State of Israel and defiling the honour of Israel among the nations.
>
> Please accept my sympathy and express the same to Mrs. Ershov and to the other members of the legation who have suffered as a result of this foul attack.
>
> Yitzhak Ben-Zvi
> President.

This letter has the same aim as the government statement mentioned in my previous telegram.

Ershov

457
Meeting: A.Ia. Vyshinskii – Sh. Eliashiv (Moscow, 12 February 1953)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.6, P.5, D.4, L.1

At 1:00 a.m. today, 12 February, I received Eliashiv. I read aloud and handed to him the Soviet government's note about the terrorist act committed on 9 February against the Soviet legation in Israel (enclosed).[1]

Eliashiv argued that the statements of the government of Israel expressing regret for the terrorist act were not empty words but expressed the sincere conviction of the Israeli people.

I answered that the Israeli people and the government of Israel were completely different. There was no doubt at all that the terrorist act committed against the legation of the USSR in Israel was the direct result of an unbridled and hostile campaign against the Soviet Union which had been conducted in Israel at the direct instigation of the Israeli government. The government of Israel bore complete responsibility for this criminal act.

The conversation lasted for seven minutes. Comrade Bazarov was present.

A. Vyshinskii

458
Note from the USSR Government to the Israeli Legation in Moscow

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.6, P.15, D.4, L.1
Moscow, 11 February 1953

Handed to the Minister of Israel, Eliashiv, by Comrade A.Ia. Vyshinskii on 12 February [19]53, at 1:00 a.m.

To the Legation of the State of Israel in the USSR, Moscow,

On 9 February, with the blatant connivance of the police, criminals detonated a bomb on the premises of the Soviet legation in Israel. As a result, the minister's wife, K.V. Ershov, the wife of a legation official, A P. Sysoev, and a member of the legation, I.E. Grishin, were seriously injured. The legation building was damaged by the explosion.

On 10 February, the president and the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent letters to the Soviet legation, in which they apologized for this evil deed, declared that the Israeli government condemned this criminal act, and said that measures were being taken to find and punish the criminals.[1]

Doc. 457
1. Doc. 458.

Doc. 458
1. Docs. 453, 456.

However, in light of the well-known and indisputable fact that representatives of the government of Israel are party to the systematic kindling of hatred and incitement of hostile activities against the Soviet Union, it is perfectly clear that the statements and apologies of the government of Israel for the terrorist act of 9 February on the premises of the Soviet legation are merely a ruse, designed to cover up the traces of the crime committed against the Soviet Union and to avoid responsibility for this villainy, which rests on the government of Israel. It is not only articles published in the press of the ruling parties of Israel which aim to provoke trouble, but also speeches made in parliament by representatives of these parties and members of the government of Israel, in particular, the speech of 19 January of this year by Minister of Foreign Affairs Sharett, openly instigating hostile acts against the Soviet Union.[2]

The terrorist act which took place on 9 February demonstrates the absence of the most basic conditions for normal diplomatic activity by the representatives of the Soviet Union in Israel.

In view of what has been said above, the Soviet government is recalling the minister of the Soviet Union and the personnel of the Soviet legation in Israel and is breaking off relations with the government of Israel.

Simultaneously, the Soviet government declares the impossibility of [permitting] the continued presence of the Israeli legation in Moscow, and demands that the personnel of the legation leave the territory of the Soviet Union at once.

459
Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Israeli Missions Abroad

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2377/1
Tel Aviv, 12 February 1953

The severance of relations by the Soviet Union takes advantage of a convenient pretext for a step which comprises the final stage in a political process initiated by the Communists about a year ago, and whose roots go back still further, namely:

a) the link to Israel of the Jews in the Soviet bloc. The regime does not tolerate spiritual vacillation connected with extraneous influences.

b) Israel's status as a free democracy. The very existence of the legation in Moscow has become a thorn in the side of the regime and hence its action is aimed mainly for domestic purposes.

The speed of the process indicates that the Soviet Union believes in the possibility of war in the not too distant future. At first they tried to eradicate the link of the Jews [to Israel] by applying only internal pressure on the Jews: police oppression, liquidation of Jewish institutions, the 1949 campaign against cosmopolitanism. The expectation in the satellite countries was that after the

2. See Editorial Note, pp. 854–5.

emigration of a small number of Jews, the others would integrate culturally into the monolithic character of the regime. They hoped for a stronger communist influence in Israel. In the spring of 1952 they stopped the emigration from Romania, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary. They broke their promises to allow further limited emigration. In November 1952 – the Slansky trial, followed by an unbridled propaganda campaign against Israel. The middle of January 1953 – the arrest of the Jewish doctors in Moscow and intensification of the campaign connecting the Slansky case with the Doctors' Plot and denouncing Zionists, cosmopolitans, Jewish nationalists, Israel, the Joint, etc. Simultaneously, Kubovy's expulsion at the beginning of December, and the expulsion of Walter, the attaché, from Budapest at the beginning of January.[1] Arrests and suicides among the local staff of our legations. Infraction of the diplomatic immunity of two Israeli diplomats whom they had attempted, unsuccessfully, to blackmail into becoming Soviet spies. The Poles, and the Czechs in particular, submitted notes,[2] which appeared to lay the groundwork for the severance of relations and which repeated the accusations of the Slansky trial, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, complained about visits to synagogues, calls of local citizens at our legations in connection with emigration, the encouragement of Zionist activity, etc. The terrorist provocation against the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv was exploited to bring the process to an end in spite of Israel's apology and proposal to pay compensation. Our present concern relates to the future of the Jews in the Communist bloc.

The Ministry

1. Yosef (Walter) Avidan, cultural attaché in the Israeli legation in Hungary, had been declared *persona non grata* at the beginning of February 1953. For Kubovy, see Doc. 454, n. 2.
2. For the notes exchanged between Israel and Czechoslovakia following the Slansky trial and the expulsion of Kubovy, see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 8, No. 63, pp. 115–16.

460
P.I. Ershov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVR RF, F.059, OP.30, P.53, D.311, LL.73–4
Tel Aviv, 13 February 1953

A report on the severance of diplomatic relations between the USSR and Israel was published yesterday in special editions of the evening newspapers. The comments were contradictory and insubstantial. Plainly, government circles had hoped to avoid the severance by means of hypocritical statements, and when they were faced with it, were at a loss. So far there has been no government statement. In a meeting with journalists, a Foreign Ministry spokesman announced that 'the formal motivation for this step (i.e., our decision regarding severance) is merely a pretext'. Today's newspapers comment on the question of the severance of relations in precisely the same spirit. Apart from this, the newspapers maintained that the severance of relations had been in the making for a long time, that by this act the USSR sought to break the links between the Jews of the USSR and Israel, that the fate of the Soviet Jews was now uncertain, and that they purportedly would be subjected to reprisals, persecutions and the like. Appearing at a meeting in Petah Tikva, Golda Meyerson announced that 'the day of the severance of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union is a black day for Israel, the Israeli people, and especially the Jews of the USSR'. Some newspapers go so far as to say that the decision to break off relations is intended to win over the Germans of the German Democratic Republic to the side of the USSR and to increase Arab sympathy for the USSR.

Progressive public opinion has reacted correctly to the Soviet government's decision to break off its relations with Israel. It places responsibility for the rupture on Ben-Gurion's government, which, by kindling hostility towards the USSR, incited fascist elements to commit terrorist acts against the Soviet legation.

Ershov

461
Ia.A. Malik to G.M. Malenkov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.018, OP.17, P.37, D.29, LL.1–2
Moscow, 15 February 1953
Top Secret

In connection with the severance of diplomatic relations with the government of Israel, the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs submits the following proposals for consideration:

1) to reach an agreement with the government of Bulgaria, which authorizes it to assume responsibility for protecting Soviet interests in Israel.

At present Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia and Hungary have diplomatic missions in Israel. The Bulgarian mission is headed by a minister. The heads of mission of the other three countries are chargés d'affaires. Poland has only consulates in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

2) to recall the TASS correspondent, Comrade D.E. Kobelev, and the representative of Soveksportfilm, Comrade G.I. Zubkov, simultaneously with recalling the Soviet legation from Israel.

3) to leave in Israel the representative of the Soviet Academy of Sciences' Russian Palestine Society, Comrade I.I. Zaitsev, who is stationed in Jerusalem, and the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission, also stationed in Jerusalem, consisting of six Soviet citizens sent there by the Moscow Patriarchate: the head of the mission, Archimandrite Polikarp (G.A. Primak), the members of the mission, Archpriest A.S. Gromov and Priest G.T. Khomutov, the mission secretary, V.I. Miroshin, the mission doctor, N.M. Miroshina, and the mission bursar, I.V. Varlamov.

A CPSU Central Committee decree is enclosed.

Please give due consideration.

Ia. Malik

* * *

[DRAFT] RESOLUTION OF THE CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE

The matter [concerning] the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1) The USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs is instructed to reach an agreement with the government of Bulgaria to take responsibility for protection of Soviet interests in Israel.

2) The TASS correspondent and the acting representative of Soveksportfilm are to be recalled from Israel.

3) The USSR Council of Ministers Committee for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (Comrade Karpov) is to recommend to the Moscow Patriarchate not to recall the Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission from Israel.

4) The Academy of Sciences of the USSR (Comrade Topchiev) is not required to recall the representative of the Russian Palestine Society from Israel.[1]

1. Handwritten note at the top of the document: 'Issue resolved. Instructions given on departure of TASS correspondent and Soveksportfilm representatives. Agreed with the Bulgarian government, Ia. Malik.'

462
Ia.A. Malik to I.V. Stalin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.018, OP.17, P.37, D.30, LL.7–9
Moscow, 16 February 1953
Top Secret

To Comrade I.V. Stalin,

On 12 February, Poland's Minister of Foreign Affairs Skrzeszewski handed a memorandum to the Soviet chargé d'affaires in Warsaw, which states that as a result of the terrorist act against the legation of the USSR in Israel and the sum total of hostile actions by the government of Israel, the government of Poland considers that the People's Democracies should make a joint statement against Israel; for its part, the government of Poland considers that the most suitable response to the Israeli provocation would be to break off diplomatic relations with Israel. At the same time, Skrzeszewski reported that he was instructing the Polish ambassadors in Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria to find out what the governments of those countries thought about the Polish proposal.

On 12 February, Romania's Minister of Foreign Affairs Bughici reported to the chargé d'affaires of the USSR in Bucharest that the severance of diplomatic relations between the USSR and Israel had made the Romanian government consider whether Romania should maintain relations with Israel. At the same time, Bughici pointed out that apart from libellous attacks by the Israeli mass media, there had been no hostile statements against Romania on the part of Israel.

The Hungarian government informed the minister of the USSR that, in view of the severance of diplomatic relations between the USSR and Israel, it was itself considering breaking off diplomatic relations with Israel, especially since the Hungarian authorities had at their disposal material attesting to espionage by the personnel of the Israeli legation in Budapest. On the basis of this material, a trial of the spies who had been exposed was being prepared, but the question of severance of relations with Israel was not necessarily linked to this trial.

The government of Hungary further stated that the Polish government was proposing that Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria make a collective protest about the terrorist act against the Soviet legation in Israel, and that the Hungarian government agreed with this proposal in principle.

In response to the above-mentioned Polish proposal, the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry informed the Soviet chargé d'affaires that the Foreign Ministry had agreed to send an appropriate diplomatic note to the government of Israel.

The governments of Poland, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria made a request through the Soviet embassy [in their capitals] that the Soviet government's view of these matters be communicated to them.

On 16 February, the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry made a request through its ambassador in Moscow to the Soviet Foreign Ministry that we inform them of our opinion as to whether Czechoslovakia ought to maintain relations with Israel, especially taking into account the Czechoslovak diplomatic note to Israel of 4 February of this year.[1] In this note, in addition to the demand voiced earlier by the Czechoslovak government concerning the recall from Czechoslovakia of the Israeli envoy, it was pointed out that the Israeli government had provoked and supported an anti-Czechoslovak campaign and that responsibility for the deterioration of Israeli–Czechoslovak relations rested entirely on the government of Israel.

The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers it advisable to instruct the Soviet ambassadors in Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria to give the following answer about the proposed joint statement by these countries:

> The Soviet government has responded to the act of terrorism against the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv by breaking off diplomatic relations with Israel. In Moscow it is not considered expedient to reinforce this with a joint statement by the countries friendly to us.

As for the question put by the governments of Poland, Hungary and Romania about breaking off diplomatic relations with Israel, the answer should be that in Moscow it is not considered that this question should be linked to the terrorist act against the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv and the severance of diplomatic relations between the USSR and Israel. The question of maintaining diplomatic relations with Israel should be viewed according to the state of these relations and with reference to the specific conditions that currently obtain.

A similar reply should be given to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia through the Czechoslovak ambassador in Moscow.

A draft resolution of the Central Committee of CPSU is enclosed.[2]

Please give due consideration.[3]

Ia. Malik

---

1. See Doc. 459 and n. 2 there.
2. On file.
3. Sent to Stalin (2 copies), Malenkov (2 copies), Beria, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Bulganin, Khrushchev, Saburov and Pervukhin.

463
Ia.A. Malik to G.M. Malenkov (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.018A, OP.17, P.37, D.30, L.23
Moscow, 21 February 1953
Top Secret

To Comrade G.M. Malenkov,

I am reporting that the former Israeli legation in Moscow, with its entire staff, has left the USSR, crossing the Soviet–Finnish border at 11.35 p.m. on 20 February.

According to the telegram *en clair* received by the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs from Comrade Ershov, the staff of our legation in Israel completed their embarkation onto the Turkish steamer *Kadesh*, in the port of Haifa (Israel), at 7 p.m., Moscow time, on 20 February. According to a report from the Bulgarian minister in [Israel],[1] Bogdanov, the steamer *Kadesh* left Haifa at 10.50 p.m., Israeli time (11.50 p.m., Moscow time), on 20 February.

Ia. Malik

464
Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Israeli Missions in Eastern Europe

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2377/1
Tel Aviv, 6 March 1953

a) Fly the flag at half-mast in mourning for Stalin,[1] as do the Western missions.
b) Do not pay condolence calls and do not sign the condolence books.
c) Attend the memorial ceremonies if invited to do so by the government.[2]
d) Cable.

East European Division

Doc. 463

1. Original has 'Sofia' – an apparent error made by the typist.

Doc. 464

1. According to the official announcement of 6 March, Stalin died the previous evening.
2. Israeli missions in the West, on the other hand, received the following cable: 'You are not to fly the flag at half-mast, not to sign the memorial book at the Soviet mission, and not to participate in any other official display of mourning' (telegram of 6 March 1953, ISA 130.09/2377/1).

465
Israeli Legation in the Netherlands to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

COPY: ISA 130.02/2410/18
The Hague, 9 March 1953

The Israeli legation pays its respects to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and on the basis of the agreement of the government of the Netherlands to represent the interests of the State of Israel, has the honour to request that the government of the Netherlands consent to convey the condolences and sympathy of the government and the people of Israel to the government of the USSR on the occasion of the death of their leader, Generalissimo Stalin.

The Israeli legation would like to take this opportunity to reiterate to the Foreign Ministry assurances of its highest esteem.

466
Press Release by the Spokesman of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

COPY: ISA 130.02/2410/18
Tel Aviv, 4 April 1953

The government of Israel learned with great satisfaction of the official statement issued in Moscow to the effect that the libel against Jewish doctors has been proven false and that the alleged 'confessions' by the doctors had been extorted by unacceptable means.[1] This, in effect, is an unqualified endorsement of the stand taken in this matter by the government of Israel in the Knesset on 19 January 1953.

In connection with the doctors, false accusations were levelled against Jewish organizations the world over, such as the Joint and the Zionist Organization, and libel against the doctors served as the basis for an anti-Jewish campaign which included the severance of relations with the State of Israel.

The government of Israel hopes that rectification of this injustice will be consummated by putting an end to the anti-Jewish campaign, and it would welcome the resumption of normal relations between the Soviet Union and Israel.

---

1. On 4 April 1953 the Soviet Ministry of the Interior issued a communiqué stating that thorough investigations had revealed that the doctors and specialists accused in January of having hastened the death of Soviet leaders and of conspiring against the lives of Soviet military leaders had been wrongfully arrested and that the charges brought against them were unfounded.

467
B. Razin to Sh. Bentsur (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2457/146
Sofia, 10 April 1953
Secret

On the 4th inst. I was invited with my wife to a reception at the Hungarian legation. A few minutes after we had entered the central hall of the legation I saw Mr. Bodrov, the Soviet ambassador, standing about 10 metres from me and talking with the Polish ambassador, the latter pointing at the corner where we were standing together with one of the Western representatives. In a matter of seconds Mr. Bodrov came up, shook our hands and inquired about our health. At first I thought he had not recognized us, as I had met him only once, at a garden party at the Soviet embassy on 10 September last year, and the following day he had left Sofia returning only at the beginning of this March.

The ambassador started with small talk, and very soon the French minister and his wife entered the hall and joined us, and I translated for them into Russian and French and took part in the conversation. One of his staff came up and called him aside, but he went on talking and related how he had recuperated during his home leave, and added jokingly, 'You can depend on the Soviet doctors', and then he turned to me and asked whether I had read today's *Pravda* and whether I knew the outcome of the Doctors' Plot.[1] I replied in the affirmative, and added that today was our Festival of Passover – our celebration of freedom, and therefore I raised a toast to his government, congratulating it on its courage, and expressing the hope that everything connected with that sad episode would very soon be resolved. The ambassador replied, 'That was well said. I also am happy and proud of my government's courage; this indeed is characteristic of the Soviet government. Please, translate what I have said for the French minister.' I asked whether he wanted me to translate only his words or also mine, and he said, 'Everything, everything'. The French minister replied that he was also happy about the day's events and that he could understand how his colleague (meaning me) felt and that he shared this feeling. I said to the ambassador that with the dismissal of the charges against the Jewish doctors the groundwork had been laid for the renewal of relations with my country. The ambassador chuckled and asked how I came to know Russian, etc. The conversation lasted some 7 to 8 minutes and broke off when the prime minister entered the hall.

The halls were chock-full of people, all the Western representatives were also there and they were surprised at seeing me in the company of Mr. Bodrov for such a long while. Some of them, who were standing behind us, overheard our conversation.

---

1. See Doc. 466, n. 1.

The other Eastern [bloc] representatives were very friendly and also entered into conversation with us on various 'neutral' subjects. The people of the Hungarian legation gave us a warm welcome. The only one of all the staff of the Soviet embassy who greeted us was the second secretary, who is in charge of protocol. I conclude from this that the conversation had limited significance and that it definitely was not fortuitous.

[...][2]

I would be very much interested to know whether our colleagues in other legations had any contact with the people of the Eastern [bloc] missions and with those from the Soviet Union in particular.

Sincerely,

B. Razin

468
B. Razin to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.11/2507/5
Sofia, 14 April 1953

At a meeting with the Czech ambassador and his wife at their residence I requested an emigration passport for a Czech Jew now living in Bulgaria, and was promised that everything would be taken care of. After they had had some drinks I was told that:

a) the renewal of relations between the USSR and Israel was to be expected soon;

b) they had all been waiting for Israel's response[1] and were happy with its extended hand;

c) it could now be accepted that the bomb had been thrown by a solitary frustrated person;

d) when he returned from Moscow in the middle of March, the Soviet ambassador had given instructions to initiate contact with Westerners, and with the Austrians and the Israelis in particular;

e) the Czech thinks that most of our population are socialists and when they become stronger their dependence will decrease.

It is clear now that the visit paid by the Romanian and Polish ambassadors to Avner was not fortuitous.[2] Do not publish the source of this information.

Doc. 467

2. Two paragraphs dealing with extraneous issues have been omitted.

Doc. 468

1. See Doc. 466.
2. Reference is to a courtesy visit paid by the Romanian and Polish ambassadors to Avner in Sofia (see East European Division to the Israeli Delegation to the UN, 4 April 1953, ISA 130.09/2330/14).

469
Israeli UN Delegation to W. Eytan and M. Sharett

CODED TEL: ISA 130.02/2410/19
New York, 25 April 1953
Secret

The delegation held a comprehensive discussion on the debates in the Assembly in light of the Soviet reaction at the last meeting of the committee.[1] The delegation was unanimous in drawing the following conclusions:

a) Vyshinskii's words were harsh and bitter and would better have been left unsaid. On the other hand, the weight and justness of the Israel representative's speech in defence of the [Jewish] nation and the [Zionist] movement are not to be measured by Vyshinskii's reaction but by their import and essential content. It is a mistake to assume that the absence of a reaction on Vyshinskii's part would have proved that the delegation had done and spoken well, while his hostile reaction was incisive proof that we had erred. Accepting the evaluation of the justness of our words by a foreign factor, let alone someone like Vyshinskii who is known for his hasty and venomous reactions, would be tantamount to relinquishing Israel's sovereign status in the sphere of thought and expression.

b) It was noted that the two speeches of Monday and of Thursday had gone through identical and uniform processes, that is, final responsibility for approval of the drafts was borne by the head of the delegation. In both cases, the phrasing was Eban's throughout, and in both cases the drafts were scrutinized and checked by veteran members of the delegation.

c) The delegation examined the speeches in order to discover whether they contained any unnecessary provocation of Vyshinskii, and the conclusion was that every word in both speeches was the absolute truth, with not a jot of, so

1. Reference is to an exchange of speeches and retorts between Israeli and Soviet delegates in the First (Political) Committee of the Seventh Session of the UN General Assembly. It began on 13 April with a speech of Golda Meyerson, who headed the Israeli delegation. After expressing satisfaction with Soviet retraction of the allegations against the doctors, she levelled strong criticism against Soviet treatment of the Jewish minority in the USSR. She called for granting a greater measure of self-determination to this minority, including the ability to participate in the common endeavour of the Jewish people to renew its national life in Israel.

   Meyerson was followed by Eban, who, in reply to Arab accusations, stated on 16 April, that the allegations against the doctors displayed 'anti-Jewish incitement of the worst kind' and reminded the committee that the Prague trial, with all its antisemitic manifestations, was still going on. Eban's strong words triggered a Soviet response on the part of Vyshinskii, who termed it 'a mixture of insinuation and slander designed to poison the atmosphere' and said that he had no intention of responding to such filth. The Czechoslovak representative carried on in the same vein, defending the Slansky trial.

   These exchanges caused concern in the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs which was anxious to renew relations with the Soviet Union and improve relations with the Eastern bloc. This document is one of a series of exchanges that took place between Tel Aviv and New York (see *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Vol. 8, *Companion Volume*, Editorial Note, pp. 149–51; *GA OR*, 13 April 1953, pp. 599–601; *GA OR*, 16 April 1953, pp. 643–4).

to speak, libel or defamation. Both speeches highlighted a calculated effort to give the Soviet Union due credit – perhaps even more than was its due – for what it did on 4 April.[2] Moreover, we tend to ignore the central fact that Moscow only set right the injustice which weighed upon it, namely, the Doctors' Plot, and left untouched all the unpleasant consequences for Israel, namely the other accusations which are implicitly confirmed when [only] the libel against the doctors is explicitly retracted: the severance of relations, the wooing of the Arabs and encouragement of their extremism which was conspicuous in Vyshinskii's speech on Wednesday when he praised the Syrian delegate's venomous speech, the condemnation of Zionism and its suppression, and the closing of the doors [i.e., to emigration]. The delegation expressed concerned that our cries of hurrah on 4 April[3] were likely to create the feeling in Moscow that these unresolved problems did not comprise a test of the relations and that the release of a number of doctors was sufficient for us. The delegation was unanimous in its opinion that it is necessary to express our refusal to see in 4 April total salvation. If the Soviets are sincere in their desire to redress the injustice, then we should expect to see on their side enhanced efforts at reconciliation just because of this encounter [at the UN Assembly], which made clear our dissatisfaction at the partial and indeterminate progress made on 4 April. Expressing what we did became unavoidable especially after the comments by the Czechs and the Poles on our first, moderate speech. It was evident to us all that our response must reply to them and that our silence would be interpreted as acceptance of their statements. The optimal phrasing of our reaction was discussed, and it was decided to use the most moderate terms, in particular *vis-à-vis* the Russians.

d) As instructed, we enlisted the participation of various delegations in denouncing Soviet hostility. These delegations were rewarded with attacks on the part of the Russians, the Poles and the Czechs. It was unthinkable not to defend their stand and to leave them without showing appreciation for their efforts.

e) Though many delegations denounced antisemitism, none came to the defence of Zionism, so that the historic decision on whether to fold up or to raise the Zionist flag fell solely on Israel's representative.

f) *To sum up:* In contrast to the atmosphere prevailing at the committee, it was made clear to the Soviet Union, to the Jewish people and to the entire world that the announcement of 4 April did not square the Soviet Union's account with Israel, the Jewish people and Zionism. In addition, the connection was highlighted between the events in Eastern Europe and the intensification of Arab hatred – which a wise Israeli policy should not ignore.

The conclusion was also drawn that the developments in the general international situation reduced the chances of our affairs being harkened to,

2. See Doc. 466 and n. 1 there.

and also intensified Soviet anger at us because they perceived us as having robbed them of their propaganda victory as lovers of peace, brotherhood and justice in the world at large. It was also noted that this possibility had been raised in consultation with the minister, who decided that a transient parliamentary atmosphere must not prevent the Israeli delegation from fulfilling its historic mission as the emissary of the Jewish people. On her return, Golda Meyerson will provide a full report on all the above points.

The Israeli Delegation to the UN

470
Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the USSR Embassy in Sofia

COPY: AVP RF, F.018, OP.17, P.37, D.30, L.23
Sofia, 8 May 1953

NOTE VERBALE

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Bulgaria pays its respects to the embassy of the USSR in Sofia and has the honour to pass on the following communication, which has been received from the legation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria in Israel:

> On 7 May, the chairman of the Committee for International Trade Negotiations in Israel and delegate to the Economic Conference in Moscow,[1] Shlomo Rosen, officially stated to the trade representative of the legation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria that, as instructed by the director of the economic division of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Moshe Bartur, he was inquiring whether the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Trade would agree, despite the severance of diplomatic relations between the two countries, to conclude a new agreement similar to that of last year on the purchase of Israeli citrus fruits. Moshe Bartur informed Shlomo Rosen that the inquiry was being made with the consent of the Israeli Ministry of Trade, which was in favour of this agreement and would make a proposal, if it knew that it would not be rejected. The Israeli side considers May to be the most convenient month for negotiations concerning this agreement.

1. See Doc. 414, n. 9.

471
G. Avner and B. Razin to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/ 2341/11
Sofia, 14 May 1953

For the East European Division,

a) The main point in the Pole's talk with Razin[1] was the former's question whether Israel would be willing to send a letter to the Soviet Union and what it would be prepared to say in it. What he meant was that he would clarify the possibility of ensuring a positive answer in the light of the proposed wording. He seemingly did not think it possible to advance the matter without a draft proposal. The intention of course was that the letter would be sent only after agreement had been reached on the wording and the assurance of a positive answer. Razin also asked him whether he had been authorized to discuss this matter.

b) Your reply to Razin was late in arriving and prevented a follow up of the matter because the Pole wanted a proposal and you demanded that Razin hear more from him and to inform him about Shapiro's cable.[2]

c) The Pole did say that he was acting on his own initiative but, on the other hand, at the farewell meeting he asked whether there was any response and said that if one arrived, it should be given to the person filling in for him and that he would find a way to pass it on and an answer would surely be given. However, when you come around to deciding whether to follow the lines he proposed, you have to take into account the possibility that he was really acting on his own and as a friend, and that nothing may come of it even if we do propose a letter. On the other hand, [I] think that if there is any chance at all of renewing relations now, it is not to be expected that they will take the initiative but preliminary negotiations on a letter or something of the sort will be necessary, just as the Pole suggested.

d) In view of the above, you have to decide whether to follow the line suggested by the Pole and to propose the draft of a letter. We can first find out

---

1. Razin reported on his talk with the Polish ambassador in Sofia, who had paid him a farewell visit. During their talk the question of the renewal of relations between Israel and the USSR was raised. The Polish ambassador said that the initiative for the renewal of relations must emanate from within Israel, since the bomb had been planted in Tel Aviv. Razin called his attention to the Israeli declaration of 4 April (see Doc. 466), adding that he did not believe that Israel could add anything to this declaration, especially since it was the USSR and not Israel that had severed relations and since there was no guarantee of a positive response by the Soviets. The ambassador offered to find out whether the response would be positive, and if so, suggested that Israel make overtures to the USSR (see Razin to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 25 April 1953, ISA 130.09/2507/5).
2. The reply was sent on 3 May. Razin was instructed to speak with the Polish ambassador before his departure and to inform him of the telegram sent by the UPI correspondent in Moscow, Henry Shapiro, published in the international press, predicting the renewal of relations between the USSR and Israel (ISA 130.09/2341/7).

from the Polish chargé d'affaires whether the ambassador spoke with him and whether he is really ready to follow up the contact.

e) If we are interested in exploring every possibility of renewing relations, I see no reason not to try and propose a draft summing up the developments which led to the severance [of relations] and ending with the release of the doctors and the government's statement, and expressing the idea that, in Israel's opinion, the root of the crisis may have been eradicated, etc.

Cable your decision.[3] I intend returning to Budapest on Wednesday unless you instruct otherwise.

Avner, Razin

472
P.I. Gerasimov to G.M. Pushkin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.6, P.15, D.11, L.3
Moscow, 18 May 1953
Top Secret

ISRAEL'S ATTEMPTS TO RENEW DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE USSR
(*Brief*)

On 4 April this year the Soviet Ministry of Interior published its communiqué about the rehabilitation and release of the group of doctors.[1] Attempts were then made by Israel to restore diplomatic relations with the USSR.

On 4 April of this year, Israeli Foreign Minister Sharett told newspaper correspondents in New York that his country 'would welcome the restoration

---

Doc. 471

3. In reply, Avner was instructed to speak with the Polish chargé d'affaires in order to ascertain whether he had been briefed by the ambassador on the matter and been instructed to deal with Israel's draft letter. He was also told to clarify whether the ambassador had acted on his own initiative or according to instructions and to extract some hint as to what the Soviet Union wished to see in the Israeli letter (see telegram from the East European Division to Avner, 17 May 1953, ISA 130.11/2507/5).

   Avner and Razin met with the Polish chargé d'affaires on 19 May and informed him that the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs was inclined to accept the proposal concerning the letter, but would like to receive some indications of its desired content and wording in order to ensure a positive reply. The chargé d'affaires passed the information on to the Soviet ambassador in Sofia, who indicated that he would reply to Israel through the Polish representative, but that it would take some time. At the same meeting, the Israelis were informed that the proposal made by the Polish ambassador in Bulgaria to Razin was his own personal initaitive, taken with the knowledge of the Soviet ambassador but not on his explicit instructions (see Avner and Razin to the East European Division, 20 May 1953, ISA 130.11/2507/5).

Doc. 472

1. See Doc. 466, and n. 1 there.

of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union' (Telegram from Reuter's Agency in New York, published in the newspaper *Jerusalem Post* on 5 April [19]53).

On 4 April, a representative of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, speaking for the government, declared:

> The false accusations against the doctors also served as a basis for an anti-Jewish campaign, one step in which was the severance by the Soviet Union of diplomatic relations with Israel.
>
> The government of Israel hopes that the redress of the injustice will be completed by the termination of the anti-Jewish campaign and will welcome the resumption of normal relations between the Soviet Union and Israel, the government statement concluded.
>
> (*Jerusalem Post* of 5.4.[19]53 – as enclosed).[2]

Apart from these official statements, the government of Israel has been taking soundings through diplomatic and other channels about the possibility of restoring diplomatic relations with the USSR.

a) On 7 April of this year, the New York correspondent of the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, A. Gelblum, sent a telegram to the Soviet embassy in Washington, in which he expressed the desire to get a response from Comrade V.M. Molotov to these questions:

1) In view of the statement by Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs Sharett on 3 April [*sic*] in New York and an official declaration by the Israeli government in Jerusalem on 4 April that the government would welcome the renewal of diplomatic relations between the USSR and Israel, what is the position of the Soviet government on this question and how could this renewal be brought about?

2) Would the government of the USSR consider permitting its Jewish citizens who so desire to immigrate to Israel?

3) Does the Soviet government still consider that the proposed Middle East defence organization and participation in it constitute unfriendly acts towards the USSR? (incoming telegram from Comrade V.M. Karavaev, no. 9142 of 7 April [19]53).

On 10 April of this year, instructions signed by the minister were given to the Soviet embassy in the US, in which it was said that Gelblum's telegram was of no interest (outgoing telegram to Washington, no. 7417 of 10 April [19]53).

b) On 9 April of this year, the Mexican minister in Denmark, Manrique, in a conversation with the Soviet minister in Copenhagen, Comrade Vetrov, gave his opinion on the expediency of restoring relations between the USSR and Israel and offered to mediate. Manrique said that if his ideas were found to be acceptable, he was ready to go to Stockholm for preliminary informal talks with the Israeli minister to the Scandinavian countries, Nissan, so that Nissan could then get in touch with Comrade Vetrov (incoming telegram from Comrade V.M. Vetrov, no. 3824 of 9 April [19]53).

---

2. See Doc 466.

On 11 April, Comrade Vetrov received instructions not to respond to the Mexican minister's approach, but if Manrique were to raise the question again, he was to answer that he himself was not dealing with this matter (incoming telegram no. 7542 from 11 April [19]53).

c) On 1[8] April, Comrade Vyshinskii reported that the director of the East European Division at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Levavi, and the deputy permanent representative of Israel at the UN, Rafael, had visited the permanent representative of Poland at the UN, Birecki, and had asked him about possible Polish assistance in restoring relations between Israel and the USSR. According to Birecki and Skrzeszewski, when the Israeli representatives talked about the assistance of the Poles, they were trying to find out whether they could count on a favourable reaction from the Soviet representatives to the establishment of contact with Israeli representatives.

Comrade Vyshinskii expressed the view that we should not be in a hurry to respond to the Israeli soundings but should rather wait for the outcome of the investigation into the explosion and see how Israel behaved in the future (incoming telegram from Comrade Vyshinskii, no. 3667, of 19 April [19]53).

d) On 27 April, the Polish ambassador in Bulgaria, Barchacz informed the Soviet ambassador in Sofia, Comrade Bodrov, that the Israeli representative in Bulgaria, First Secretary Ben-Zion Razin, had told him that the Israeli government was looking for a way to approach the Soviet government with a proposal for the restoration of normal diplomatic relations and that it would be desirable for the Polish government to show some interest in this. Razin said that he had instructions from his government to discuss this with Barchacz, and he would confirm this by letter.[3]

These are Israel's attempts to achieve the restoration of diplomatic relations with the USSR.

It should be noted that the Arab countries, where, in general, news of the severance of diplomatic relations between the USSR and Israel was favourably received, are now paying attention to the further development of Soviet–Israeli relations.

For instance, on 18 April, the minister of Syria in Pakistan, Gawad al-Mourabet, talking to the Soviet chargé d'affaires in Karachi, Comrade Dorofeev, said that if the Soviet government were to restore diplomatic relations with Israel, 'the entire population of the Arab countries would be greatly distressed' (incoming telegram from Comrade Dorofeev, no. 128–129 of [19] April [19]53).

Assistant Director of the Near and Middle East Department
I. Gerasimov

3. See Doc. 471 and n. 1 there.

473
G. Avner and B. Razin to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Tel Aviv)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.11/2507/5
Sofia, 28 May 1953

East European Division, please avoid wide distribution.

(a) The ambassador[1] met us in his office, very cordially, first thing in the morning. [The] first secretary was also present but he remained silent throughout, since we had requested the meeting in order for them to hear what we had to say. We repeated the government of Israel's declaration of April [4],[2] explained its content, related it to the international situation and to our government's policy of maintaining friendly relations with all states and to Malenkov's speech on resolving issues and maintaining correct relations and so on,[3] mentioned our talks with the Poles here and repeated our formulation according to our 67.[4] He said he had to transmit everything precisely and would do so immediately. He did not know whether the reply would come through Sofia but he assumed so, and also that there would not be any great delay. He said explicitly that he understood well the point about a formulation agreed upon in advance in order to avoid [unnecessary] correspondence or a negative response. He asked whether our intention was to establish diplomatic relations or to develop friendly relations altogether, and it appeared that he distinguished between the two. 'The very fact that I agreed to meet you is an indication of my willingness to help' (the verb used signifies a personal wish). He concluded by categorically demanding that this and future meetings with him be kept secret, and as he parted from us resumed a very cordial tone.

(b) You will have noted the process of normalization of the Russian diplomatic mission in Belgrade and Athens; perhaps they plan to act similarly in all the countries where the situation is now irregular, without this signifying the development of substantially friendly relations, and hence the ambassador's question.

(c) With all due respect, was it impossible to explain in the United States the distortion of the flag affair[5] without stressing our hostility to communism,

---

1. Soviet ambassador in Sofia, M.F. Bodrov.
2. Doc. 466.
3. Reference is to a speech of the chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Malenkov, on 26 May 1953 on the occasion of the meeting of the newly elected Supreme Soviet. See also Doc 475 and n. 4 there.
4. See Doc. 471, n. 3.
5. On 25 May the ministers of the General Zionist Party left the government in protest against the proposed State Education Law, which included permission to fly the red flag and to sing the 'Internationale' in schools wishing to do so. The departure of the General Zionists caused adverse comments in the US to the effect that Israel was dominated by a party that espoused communist ideas. The General Zionists rejoined the government on 4 June.

when even its implacable enemies like Churchill and Tito avoid such expressions in order to preserve a [positive] atmosphere and perhaps to achieve an improvement in relations and in deeds. Are we not agreed that refraining from attacks in speeches and in the press does not guarantee good results, while provocation in tactical situations could prove harmful or at least provide them with more ammunition against Israel and fuel suspicion of the Jews of Eastern Europe. Do forgive us.

Avner, Razin

Editorial Note

NOTE VERBALE FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF THE USSR TO THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL, 2 JUNE 1953

On 2 June 1953 Soviet ambassador in Sofia Mikhail Bodrov read the following note to Israeli chargé d'affaires in Sofia Gershon Avner, and to first secretary of the legation Ben-Zion Razin:

> Responding to the Israeli minister's statement of 28 May [Doc. 473], the Soviet ambassador in Sofia declares that the Soviet Union is prepared to consider the request for resumption of diplomatic relations with the government of Israel. In this context, the situation that precipitated the severance of relations between the two countries should be borne in mind. In its note of 11 February [Doc. 458], the government of the USSR announced that criminal elements had detonated a bomb on the premises of the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv; the wife of the minister, the wife of a member of the legation staff, and a member of the staff had been injured, and the building had been damaged. The Soviet government expects the government of Israel to inform it of the steps it has taken to punish the perpetrators of this act of terrorism.
>
> As for Avner's assertion that the government of Israel has always sought and continues to seek friendly relations with the Soviet Union, it is to be expected that such an aspiration be reflected in Israel's foreign policy. The renewal and maintenance of normal relations between the USSR and Israel are inextricably linked to Israel's position on military pacts and agreements directed against the Soviet Union. If the Israeli government wishes to affirm its statement on relations with the Soviet Union, it must, for the sake of peace, promise to refrain from participation in alliances and agreements directed against the Soviet Union.
>
> The decision as to whether the appropriate conditions prevail for the renewal of diplomatic relations depends on Israel's attitude to the aforementioned problem.
>
> The Soviet Union, which actively supported the establishment of the State of Israel, affirms its desire to maintain friendly relations with Israel.

He asked that the Israeli note include a reference to the punishment imposed on those guilty of throwing the bomb at the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv and the issue of military alliances. He requested that further contacts be conducted directly with him and not through intermediaries (see Avner and Razin to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 3 June 1953, ISA 130.11/2507/7).

474
W. Eytan to the Israeli Legation in Sofia

CODED TEL: ISA 130.11/2507/5
Tel Aviv, 5 June 1953

Avner. Go see Soviet ambassador,[1] read out following statement and leave copy with him in English:

Have been instructed recall government of Israel's note 10 February 1953 to USSR legation Tel Aviv in which it expressed its profound regret and apologies for dastardly crime committed against [the Soviet] legation the previous evening, conveyed to the legation text of statement it published immediately after it learned of outrage, and offered full compensation for injuries and material damage caused.

Israel police made every effort detect and bring to justice the criminals. It conducted extensive searches in offices of certain organizations as well as in private houses, and detained for interrogation scores of persons suspected of possible complicity in the crime. Results of investigation unfortunately proved negative, no substantial evidence of any kind being discovered. Police now assume criminals were not backed by any organized group, but were isolated individuals who conspired for purpose committing this outrage and succeeded in covering up their tracks.

Police continuing its efforts in hope of discovering clues which may yet make possible apprehension and trial of criminals and inflicting of condign punishment.

With regard future relations between USSR and Israel, the government of Israel does not consider that maintenance of diplomatic relations between any two countries should be conditioned by attitude of either on current international issues. At same time have been instructed place on record fact that no military pact whatsoever exists between Israel and any other power, and that Israel has no intention concluding or adhering to any such pact. Israel harbours no hostile intent towards USSR and will under no circumstances be a party to any aggressive design or action against it. It will be recalled that in its reply of 8 December [19]51[2] to Soviet Foreign Ministry note of 21 November [19]51[3] the government of Israel declared: 'Israel has never agreed and will not agree to support the execution or preparation of acts of aggression against USSR or any other peace-loving state.' This policy remains unchanged.

The government of Israel deeply appreciates USSR government's statement of its readiness maintain in future, as in past, the friendly attitude towards Israel which found expression at time of Israel's establishment, and is anxious, on its part, to reciprocate this relationship of friendship.

Before calling on ambassador, read also our 65.[4]

---

1. See Editorial Note, p. 901.
2. Doc. 389.
3. Doc. 387.
4. Eytan's reference is to the following telegram to the legation in Sofia:

   Should the ambassador argue against the first part of your communiqué and assert that, in fact, we took no steps either to prevent the incident or to find the culprits, you can reply

475
G. Avner to A. Levavi (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.02/2381/21
Sofia, 6 June 1953

Dear Arye,

This evening we decoded the statement you addressed to the Soviets.[1] It must, of course, be clear to you that, in view of the way things have evolved, this is not so much a statement as a proposal on our part for the formulation of a letter which will also include a formal approach on the re-establishment of relations. The Russians may possibly dispense with the need for an official letter on the re-establishment of relations following the exchange of statements. We shall find that out. In any case, when we deliver the message we shall ask them to clarify the procedure for pursuing the matter.

I do not think the ambassador will argue with us. He is not empowered to do this. He conveys what he has received from home and transmits what we give to him. But Moscow may have comments to make.

While the second part, about pacts etc., is very well formulated, I feel that the first part dealing with the bomb is not written convincingly. It is full of conventional and well-worn phrases which do not sound very sincere; it looks as if it had been drafted casually. After all, they do have the right to demand explanations in this matter, and we – instead of stressing anew our regrets, etc. – only repeat verbatim our former statement. Instead of explaining exactly *how many* persons were detained for investigation and *how many* searches were carried out, we use vague expressions like 'scores' and 'extensive'. I think that this entire chapter should have been given a more serious tenor by describing accurately and in more detail the efforts that have been made. I even think that it would not have been out of place to insert a sentence – as we did to the Swedes in the Bernadotte affair[2] – explaining that our population is in the process of coalescing, that it is composed of a conglomerate of various and odd elements which had been through a great deal of suffering in the countries of their origin, and that as a result of this sociological fact we have unruly and even criminally-inclined elements who are not strangers to violence. I think that it would have been good *vis-à-vis* the Russians, and also

(cont.)

that we do not bear sole responsibility for this situation. As for preventive measures, it is well known that we wished to place guards at a particular spot but were not allowed to do so. As for not finding the culprits, we wanted to conduct an investigation at the site of the explosion immediately, but were prevented from doing so for 15 hours. If the ambassador disputes the second part, point out that the Soviet Union has relations with NATO members despite its view that this is an organization directed against it, whereas Israel is not party to any alliance' (5 June 1953, ISA 130.11/2507/5).

Doc. 475

1. Doc. 474.
2. See Doc. 169, n. 1.

good for our own country, if our population was made aware that incidents of this kind force the government to offer explanations which are sometimes rather embarrassing.

Your reaction to this will be that we do not have to overdo such embarrassing explanations, and that in any case the Russians have decided to renew relations, so that it is no longer so important what we say, and in particular what we say on this subject which is less important from the political viewpoint.

This brings me to the crux of the matter which I wish to submit for your consideration. In my opinion, if relations are renewed we have to calculate our steps versus the Soviet Union in this second round somewhat more carefully than we did in the first round. After all, a new chapter will be opened and we have to plan things anew.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding, I wish to make it clear that I view any effort in the field of our relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe not as something between us and communism and the authorities and the regime – we are of like mind here – but I see the renewed effort in the field of these relations as a means and as an attempt, in spite of everything, to prepare the ground for action on behalf of the Jews of Russia and its satellites. I view the entire matter solely from this point of view.

I have the impression that some sort of fatalism has taken root among us in this matter, which says something like: they are antagonistic to us anyway, so it is not so important how we behave towards them, what we say and write about them. After all, there was immigration from Romania even after we stopped being 'non-aligned' (your words in Zurich).[3] There is a primordial struggle between communism and Zionism and that's that. I think that this attitude includes a great deal of *post factum* self-justification. When there is a slanderous speech, we just say that nothing will have any impact on them anyway – for better or for worse – and therefore it is not important.

By the way, you can find this fatalism regarding Eastern Europe as well, in what concerns arrangements, security and other things in our missions. Locks are not put on the doors, because they penetrate everywhere and seize everything. The legations are not guarded (at least *one* of them isn't) because the authorities know everything anyway. This is nothing but a cover for laziness or negligence.

You yourself told us in Zurich that it is a mistake to think that a curtsey here and there (in the diplomatic sphere) may bring us a substantive gain from them. So the object of this letter is to tell you that I have come to the conclusion that this attitude is mistaken, if we really and truly want to do everything possible that *may* perhaps enable us to engage in saving the Jews.

I ask you to analyze carefully what the Hungarian minister in Sofia said to me a few days ago – as if in passing. As I wrote in my report after I visited

3. For the meeting in Zurich, see Doc. 451, n. 4.

him, he likes to talk and chat, and is very informal in his ways. A veteran revolutionary from the days of the Commune in Hungary in 1920, he held the office of chief of police (not the secret police) after the war, and is very close to the top echelons in Hungary. He is no longer a young man and apparently was appointed to Sofia for reasons of health. Let me quote him as accurately as possible:

> I heard that you were at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [in Budapest] and asked them to decide in principle on improving relations with Israel and to demonstrate this by taking a number of practical steps. I would like a man like you to understand a number of things. Such a decision has not and will not be taken in the form which you demanded. You know very well that policy is based on interests, as every country and regime understands them. Let us take stock together of the interests of my country towards your and your demands of us. There are three blocs in the world: the Soviet Union and its friends, the neutrals and the enemies. Among the enemies some are more and some less hostile, some are strong and dangerous and some weak and less dangerous. The second bloc includes, for instance, Switzerland, Sweden, Finland and Lebanon. You are in the third bloc.
>
> True, you also have interests and you judge what is best according to your interests. It appears that your interests tell you to link yourselves to the West, to England and the United States; you have enemies, the Arabs, immigrants, financial needs – all these enter into your considerations. In our opinion this calculation will result in your subjugation and destruction, but this is your decision. However, you should not complain if we draw our conclusions from your calculations – you are firmly in the camp which is hostile to us, to our way of thinking, to our concepts, to the form of our regime. Our entire policy is based on the assumption that one day this hostile camp will attack us in order to destroy our regime. You are in this camp; and you want to participate in a regional defensive command, which is nothing less than part of America's preparations for the day it will attack us. If this is the situation, what is our interest in doing you favours?
>
> You keep saying that you wish to be friends with the Soviet Union and with us. You say that very frequently. Let us talk frankly. This is a diplomatic phrase that you utter so that you can immediately afterwards base on it the demand for the emigration of our Jewish citizens. (By the way, I am not Jewish but I grew up in a Jewish neighbourhood and know a few words of Yiddish.) You are not our friends at all but you speak of friendship in order to base your demand on it. Your leaders and press clearly demonstrate that you are not our friends. True, your press is free as is ours, but it is also free in Switzerland and Sweden and Finland and Lebanon and you will not find there the vilifications and attacks which appear in Israel. Perhaps they, too, also do not like everything we do, but they make efforts not to show hostility. So, in general, our interests do not show that it is worthwhile doing you special favours. But your specific demand adds more considerations to what I have been saying.
>
> Our system of government is very stable and unsusceptible to change, this you know. Our regime does not allow for the emigration of people, of citizens. Look, we do not let people move and change their domicile even between the People's

Democracies. During the three years I have been here I have had cases of Bulgarians who wanted to go and live in Budapest at any cost, and vice versa, and this is usually not possible, even though the two countries are bound in an alliance of deep friendship. And the regimes of the two countries agreed that such moves should not be permitted, because it does not suit our system.

Thus, your demand to let the Jews go is in its very content and nature opposed to all the principles of our system concerning the movement of populations. Even if you had been a People's Democracy this would not have been acceptable. And you are hostile to our bloc so why would it be in our interest to accede to your demand? And, moreover, there are considerations of young manpower and considerations of security which all speak against it – so it is clear where our interests lie.

But even this is not all. You know that we are seriously interested in trade with the entire world, including that part which is hostile to our point of view. If there is trade and commerce a certain common interest is created. For instance, now and then we allow a number of citizens to leave for Switzerland because we see that they meet us halfway when it comes to trade and thus some sort of give-and-take is created. They of course also buy goods from us, but when we see that a certain country makes efforts to do something for us – it becomes a matter of interests. And here you come and base all the relations with us on your demand, which is difficult to fulfil in any case, while you show no interest at all when it comes to trade. Here again the balance of interests acts against you. So now point to one single consideration from our point of view which would make the implementation of your demand worth our while.

This does not mean that normal diplomatic relations are not possible. They are possible and I believe that they will exist, relations as with Belgium or Italy, but not as with Switzerland or Finland or Lebanon.

Allow me another word, and then I will let you go. The legations of Belgium and Italy do not do things in Budapest which are not to our liking. You do, and therefore it is up to you whether the relations will be even like those with Belgium and Italy. I have experience in these matters because as chief of police I sometimes had to deal with your Zionists. Look, one must come to terms with the regime of another country. With us the Zionist organization has been liquidated and now it no longer has a legal right to exist. Anybody who engages in this activity is violating the law, and the results are the same as committing any illegal act in any country. I know that you asked for the release of the Zionist detainees as a step towards establishing friendship. You can think whatever you wish because we do not allow Zionist organization. But this is the situation and you have to come to terms with it. These people acted against the law. But the main point is that these poor people are not to blame, it is you, the legation, which is to blame for their detention because you caused them to act against the law. If you refrain from these activities there will be no arrests because they will not act without your support and encouragement. So the crime lies on your shoulders. I heard that our Polish colleagues once wrote to you quite explicitly on this matter. I have not seen this note, but you can undoubtedly find out its content.

So, normal relations without mutual attacks are possible. I am not saying either that it is out of the question that a few or a dozen couples will be allowed to

leave. But the balance of our interests as we see them will not permit us to do anything as complicated as letting thousands of citizens go. Think about all this, and forgive me for taking up so much of your time.

He shook my hand and before I could take a breath and say anything, left me and went over to another part of the hall.

This was at the reception on the occasion of the coronation of the Queen of England. I can not say whether he had been instructed to tell me all this, as may be the case; but it would seem that when in Budapest he showed interest in the relations between us (he goes there by plane every couple of months and stays for several days) and this is what he was told. Or maybe he got interested after our talk with the Pole on the renewal of relations with the Soviet Union, or maybe he was impressed by Razin's friendship towards Russia and the East in general and therefore asked in Budapest what relations really were and why they had deteriorated to such a degree. (I once wrote to Bentsur that we heard that the Russian counsellor had said, in the presence of other people, that according to the Israeli representatives in Sofia 'Israel was going the right way'. Perhaps that was also the Hungarian's impression and he decided to find out.) What he said perhaps points also to there having been a discussion following my approach in April to the political director, or that somebody went to the trouble to explain things to him. The Hungarians may possibly know that we are talking with the Poles and the Russians in Sofia, and decided to give us their reply through Sofia as well. All these are nothing but speculation. The important thing is that what he gave was a frank and reasonable statement on their policy towards us: After all, the Russians are now exploring their position in international affairs in a quiet and more reasonable position, without name-calling and abuse (the articles in *Pravda*).[4]

This statement vindicated my opinion, which I had previous to our conversation, that it is a mistake to think that everything they do is irrational and therefore whatever we do, big or small – and the latter in particular – has no impact on them.

It is perfectly clear to me that in the 'big' matters there is nothing we can change in our policy in international relations. The overriding importance of our relations with the United States as an irrevocable necessity is palpably clear to me.

But there are also 'less big matters' and there are nuances in political behaviour. In my opinion, if we want to create conditions for action on behalf

4. Reference is to *Pravda* editorials published on 25 April 1953 and 24 May 1953. The former, a full-page article entitled 'Concerning President Eisenhower's Speech', related to a speech given to the American Society of Newspaper Editors on 16 April 1953, which was translated into Russian and printed in the same issue of *Pravda*. The editorial declared that the USSR was ready to participate in a settlement of international issues and engage in cooperation without making any prior demands to the US. The second article, which also covered almost an entire page, was entitled 'Concerning the Contemporary International Situation. On the Speech of British Prime Minister Churchill in the House of Commons on 11 May 1953'.

of the Jews in Eastern Europe, we must create a balance of interests with the East *as far as is possible* in the context of our relations with the United States; in any case we must pursue this direction and make the attempt. In the past (that is, from 1950 on), we never seriously tried to handle the 'less big' and 'smaller' matters so that a balance favourable to us might possibly be struck. I say 'might possibly' – there is obviously no guarantee that such an effort would produce results in the Jewish sphere. But political action is in large measure like 'casting thy bread upon the waters'. When it comes to the United States, do we do only those things which we are *certain* will give this or that result? No, we do not. We do many small things – apart from the big ones – so that they accumulate into large account, *in the hope* that this will produce results. In any case if we do not try, then *it is certain,* a priori, that we shall achieve nothing.

The same goes for the Soviet Union. We must not give up in advance and say we shall do nothing because in any case we will not induce emigration. The problem of the Jews of Eastern Europe is also a matter of conscience. If we want to have a clear conscience, we must do everything possible – maybe it will somehow be of use. And even if we can not tell beforehand that this will produce results, it will at least strengthen the groundwork for our demands. There is also another aspect: after all, we are also concerned about the security of the Jews as long as they remain in Eastern Europe. Even if our actions do not bring immigration – they could perhaps (again: perhaps) help in moderating suspicion of the Jews as a hostile element whose enmity is nurtured by a hostile Israel. And even if this does not do any good – it will not do any harm either, and we must not act in a way which might endanger the Jews as long as they reside in Eastern Europe.

In conclusion – because the Jews are in their countries and therefore they are in a position of strength *vis-à-vis* Israel, and because our demand truly opposes the principles of their regime, I propose that we abandon the fatalism of 'it won't help anyway' and make a deliberate effort to attempt to create a balance of interests by means of *genuinely* friendly behaviour to the limit of what is possible. And the limit is: harming or a serious fear of harming our relations with the United States. This effort should be painstaking and should be aimed at all possible small matters.

This in my opinion includes in effect:

(1) A serious principled decision to pursue the line I have proposed.

(2) A more seemly account of our efforts to identify those who threw the bomb at the Soviet legation (this costs us nothing versus the United States, and, as I said, we have to begin with small matters).

(3) Our diplomatic missions in Eastern Europe should be returned to a serious level, as far as possible, in respect of both rank and personalities (that is: a serious minister in Moscow, a minister for Warsaw and Prague, a permanent chargé d'affaires for Budapest and Sofia; or, better still: a minister in Moscow, a minister for Warsaw and Prague, a minister for Budapest,

Bucharest and Sofia; or a chargé d'affaires for Budapest and Sofia and a chargé d'affaires with the rank of counsellor in Bucharest. Anyway, you get my meaning).

(4) We should open a legation in Peking in the coming months after the signing of an armistice in Korea. We should go back to unambiguous voting in favour of People's China at the United Nations, even against the United States, because here we are in the good company of Britain and Western Europe, and I do not believe that this will have any untoward effect on our relations with the United States. It will have to be explained to Eban that sometimes his life will have to be a bit tougher, or tougher, for the sake of the Jews of Eastern Europe.

(5) Planned activity in respect of trade, meaning a real shake-up in the Economic Division insofar as it is concerned with the East. They are to be told that they have to *seek out* opportunities, together with the export centre of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, opportunities for trading with Eastern Europe. Even if nothing much comes of it – because of the lack of an economic basis for exchange with Eastern Europe – efforts should be made, and not, as now, simply to show no interest. And even if a certain deal costs the state a little money, meaning it would cost *a little* more than somewhere else, we should still sometimes propose it. We should abandon your dictum of Zurich that it is not worthwhile making efforts in the economic field for the sake of some gains here or there in diplomatic protocol, and go over to planned action in the opposite direction.

(6) Our representatives in the United States should decide to refrain from hostile expressions in their speeches there. The leadership in Israel should decide to refrain from such speeches, and the childish explanation that such speeches are necessary 'in order to educate the youth' should be discontinued.

a) Isolated speeches will never make a member of Mapam or Maki leave his party.

b) In any case, there is no danger of a serious increase in the strength of Mapam or Maki among the youth. As there is no serious problem of communism in Israel, this sort of 'education' should stop. There must be a serious effort at self-control.

(7) A binding agreement with the editors of *Haaretz, Davar, Omer, Maariv, Hador, Haboker* and other newspapers belonging to the coalition parties, including papers for the younger generation, that they refrain from any criticism of the communist regime. After all, it can be explained that this is necessary in connection with the situation of the Jews of Eastern Europe – something which is important to everybody. Criticism may be published only in respect of Jewish affairs (community life, imprisonment of Zionists), and then only after the East European Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has verified if it is true.

(8) An attempt to discuss the speeches with the leaders of America Jewry, or at least with the Zionists. This is more difficult, but at least the Zionists will be inclined to accept Israel's authority.

(9) We should refrain from harassing the communists in Israel, except when absolutely necessary. The policy should be to let them shout and write; in any case what they write is not serious. There is no reason to limit their activities or attack them excessively – except when they are a real threat to *security*.

(10) Cessation of all activities of information gathering in matters outside the scope of Jewish affairs. Let the Americans do this and foot the bill.

(11) A binding agreement should be reached with journalists in Haifa not to publicize criticism in the name of new immigrants about their countries of origin. What is said by the immigrants from Bulgaria is usually untrue. What was quoted in *Maariv* from a Russian immigrant was certainly true, but when the Russians read this they have to ask themselves, *and rightly so*, why they need this whole business of granting emigration certificates.

(12) Instructions should be given to the future Moscow legation to refrain, even with regard to Jewish affairs, from all illicit activities; this to be reconsidered after nine months.

(13) We should refrain from putting obstacles in the path of members of the peace movement when they want to go abroad to attend conferences, even if this costs some foreign currency here and there. This is all to the benefit of the Jews of Eastern Europe.

(14) We should see to it that the diplomatic staff of the East European missions find decent quarters in Jerusalem when the ministry moves there and if they follow. There should be no discrimination.

(15) There should be a serious analysis of the cases at the United Nations when we could abstain instead of voting against the Russians: we sometimes vote with the US against our own conscience. If there is some small matter in which abstention or voting with the Russians will not do us any harm in the US – then we should do so, even if we do not agree 100 per cent with the Russian proposal. We must pay a price for the Jews of Eastern Europe!

(16) We should join in the chorus of opposition to rearming Germany, both Germanies. We can find a formulation which will not offend Adenauer and [affect] the reparations agreement. It is a matter of timing and phrasing. If we do not want to offend Adenauer and clash with the US, we can express fears based on our own past experience.

And the main thing – and I come here to the end of this chapter – we should always persevere in searching for opportunities to demonstrate friendship, even in small matters, by practical steps and creating a balance of interests. I am convinced that we should make this effort if we take seriously our concern for the Jews of Eastern Europe. And, in due course, we shall naturally have to talk about immigration from Russia and try to make them influence their satellites. There is no assurance that the line I propose will have any major results. But I am certain that if we continue with the old line of neglecting relations – except, in effect, for empty expressions of friendship – nothing will improve. And I repeat: I see all this as a means of acting on behalf of the Jews. This has nothing to do with my, or our, attitude to communism or

to the regime in those countries. I hope you will weigh carefully what I have said, together with our colleagues and perhaps with the minister himself. It is worthwhile for him to see what the Hungarian said.

[...][5]

One more word about the statement to the Russians. It's a pity that it was transmitted to us in English, because:

a) There is no one in the Russian embassy who knows English and they will therefore ask us to provide them with a Russian version as well and we can not refuse. You instructed me to leave them the English version, so that even if I had managed to prepare a good French translation the English version would remain with them. There was no alternative but to give them also a Russian version and I hope Razin's translation is good. I went over it with him word by word to explain the exact meaning of the words in English to him.

b) It is a pity that the document was written in English, because English is cold in its formal style, while if it had been in French more warmth could have been introduced also into the Russian translation. This cold style is difficult from the point of view of having maximum lack of effect on speakers of Slavic languages (it is of course all right for English-speakers). That is, if in Moscow they had read a French version of the same ideas, it would have had a greater impact on the readers. Every small thing is important! (And it costs us nothing *vis-à-vis* the US.) In any case, French is the language of diplomacy and not English.

Forgive me for yet another handwritten communication – you know we have no secretary here.

Regards to you and to Rika.

Yours,

G. Avner

5. One paragraph of a personal nature has been omitted.

476
A. Levavi to G. Avner (Budapest)

COPY: ISA 130.09/2381/21
Tel Aviv, 23 June 1953
Secret/Private

Dear Gershon,

Baruch Bag brought me your personal letter[1] and I hasten to answer it. I have to admit that my reply will be incomplete and mostly negative, but I think it better to recognize the fact that one can not escape a certain reality; we shall not be able to achieve anything if we ignore reality. I am postponing to another occasion a full analysis of what the Hungarian said and of your basic reactions and will deal only with your main practical proposals – not because I look down on analysis in depth, but on the contrary – because I attach great importance to it and therefore do not think we could conduct it properly through the limited possibilities of our correspondence. I shall only permit myself to ask you: have you studied Marxist–Leninist–Stalinist literature, both classical and new, in depth? Believe me such background is very useful when you have to assess, for instance, the Hungarian's words with all their insincerity, when he talks about 'neutralism', etc.

And now to your proposals. I think you have become aware, in the meantime, that the Soviets attach no great importance to the bomb and to our apologies. This [conclusion] is supported by similar cases in the Soviet Union's diplomatic history (your proposal No. 2).

We do think it desirable to raise the level of our diplomatic mission in Eastern Europe, but it should be done on the principle of reciprocity. We are faced so far with two facts: Poland has no legation here, but only consulates, Czechoslovakia and Hungary have legations with chargés d'affaires; secondly, in spite of this state of affairs, we had a minister to Czechoslovakia and Poland for quite a long time. The results are known and are not encouraging. As long as Oren and Orenstein[2] have not been released, as long as Czechoslovakia has not settled its trading debt, as long as there is no encouraging sign (except for a lull in the vilification such as there was in the period from November 1952 to March 1953), and as long as there is no progress in the East's representation here, it is difficult to see any prospect of a unilateral step on our part. If relations with the Soviet Union are renewed, I would consider appointing a

1. Doc. 475.
2. M. Oren and S. Orenstein, two Israeli citizens were arrested in Czechoslovakia in late 1951–early 1952. Both were charged with espionage, sabotage and treason. Orenstein's trial took place in August 1953 and was combined with the trial of some ten other local Jewish citizens. The trial was conducted *in camera*. Orenstein was sentenced to life imprisonment. Oren was tried in October and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment. For Israeli protests and attempts to meet with the prisoners, see *Documents on the Foreign Affairs of Israel*, Vol. 8, No. 497, pp. 840–1.

minister in Moscow who would also be accredited to Sofia, while there would be a permanent chargé d'affaires in Hungary for that country only (your proposal No. 3).

The subject of representation in China merits consideration. However, it is clear that we shall not have the edge on leading Westerners who already have a foothold there; if only for that reason, we should not exaggerate the advantage such a step would give us *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union, and it is possible that in Asia the gain will be greater than that. While I am writing this, the situation in Korea is quite unclear and this of course defers any speedy action on our part (your proposal No. 4).

Trade. First of all, I suggest that you rid yourself of your reservations about the Economic [Division]. I do not think it is to blame for the situation. You know that there are certain clearly unfavourable realities: (a) We can not break the embargo on 'strategic materials', as the Americans define innumerable products. (b) All the Easterners are interested mainly in such products and not in the few categories of goods we can export, such as: citrus, textiles, clothing etc. (except for the Soviet Union, in the past). (c) Czechoslovakia and Poland brazenly evade settling their trading debts. (d) Israel will not buy anything under less favourable conditions, at any rate nothing of any meaningful dimensions and value, nor when the political gains are highly questionable (your proposal No. 5).

We must not forgo an unrelenting ideological struggle against communism. This, in my opinion, is an illusory proposal, not only because it can not be implemented but mainly because it must not be implemented. I do not understand the argument that a speech does not make 'any member' secede from Mapam and Maki. An ideological struggle means, of course, not just a speech, but everything together: speeches, the press, literature, the radio, etc. While the opposition is exploiting all possibilities, it is unthinkable that we should forgo anything. It is quite enough that we should keep to the rules of common courtesy and not react when Maki slanders our government by slandering the government of the Soviet Union (which, of course, controls Maki). And what is the situation in Switzerland or in Sweden (with the trials of communists)? Are they ashamed there to attack communism? The struggle is of course not against the nucleus of Maki, the Sneh group[3] and Mapam: it is about the masses, it is a most critical struggle with great prospects and still greater dangers. You are mistaken when you think that Mapam and Maki have few chances [of success]; today the opposite is true. Of course, the things heard today in the United States are expressed in a totally undesirable way – but do you have any idea of what is happening now in the United States and how the Jews feel with all this around them? The eye is sensitive to nuances, and against the background of McCarthyism all the Israeli, Zionist and Jewish

3. Moshe Sneh, who headed the leftist faction within Mapam, was expelled with his entire group in January 1953 and in May established an independent left-wing socialist party. This group joined the Israeli Communist Party toward the end of 1954.

speeches concerning the Soviet Union seem to the Americans, in spite of everything, still rather liberal. And as to our legal attitude to Maki: are they perhaps better off in Lebanon or Egypt? Israel is the only non-communist Asian state in which the Communist Party is legal and in which the communists are in effect secure against harsh oppression (such as is the rule, for instance, in Nehru's India) (your proposals Nos. 6–9).

As far as I know, the people of the peace movement have been able of late to leave freely for their conferences, with no discrimination between them and those leaving for other conferences, even though Israelis generally go to international meetings to serve their country, while 'the people of the peace movement' often exploit these meetings to slander Israel – as Mikunis did on one occasion, and his speech was later published in *Pravda*, and all, in my opinion, mainly in order to 'enlighten' the Jews of Eastern Europe (your proposal No. 13).

Of course, diplomats from Eastern Europe should not be discriminated against in matters of housing etc. I must confess that I have not noticed any discrimination in the past, at least not as a general rule (your proposal No. 14).

I do accord a certain importance to our appearances at the United Nations but I do not think this should be exaggerated. (a) It will be difficult to compete in that respect with famously enlightened countries like Afghanistan, Syria etc. (b) It is rather hard to point to the effect of the line we adopted in matters like People's China, against the express wishes of the Americans. (c) Both experience and analysis point to a clear distinction in Soviet political planning between the routine issues at the United Nations and the problem of the emigration of Jews from Eastern Europe. You can not draw an analogy between the United States and the Soviet Union in this respect; the same means do not necessarily produce the same results, but this is certainly food for thought and for judicious consideration, without attaching great hopes to it (your proposal No. 15).

There are several other proposals of yours which I have passed over for various reasons. I do not think that the overall picture changes if we come to deal with these proposals.

Nevertheless, I concur with Deutscher's[4] personal prophesy of late that there are good prospects for *aliya* from the Soviet Union within the next 5–6 years, but, like him, I do not think that it will come about as a result of Israeli tactical contrivances. There are processes (and, again, I can not go into details here within the scope of this letter) which may well put a stop to the expansion and extent of the communist world in a way which your Hungarian colleague and his spiritual forefathers never dreamed of, not a hundred years ago, not 35 years ago and not a year ago. Against the background of evolving historical processes, his so-called balance of interests which he lectured you

4. Isaac Deutscher, British historian and political scientist who wrote biographies of Trotsky and Stalin.

on looks biased and insipid. His 'yes' is not a genuine 'yes' and his 'no' is not necessarily a lasting 'no'.

However, in the meantime we have to live, to act today and tomorrow. All right, so we could try to be clever, we could make contortions, we could come up with inventions or even conjuring tricks – all this will not help and we shall not be able to cope mentally with inevitable disappointments and failures if we forgot for a single moment that the Jews of the Soviet Union have been where they are for 35 years now, and if we ignore the possibility that the present embargo might not last for another 35 years. I do not mean of course that history will reverse itself, but there is no reason to assume that it will stand still. It is moving forward, and its vaguely discernible goals in the mist of the future presage not only grave dangers for East European Jewry, but also bright prospects and liberation.

[...][5]

Yours,

A. Levavi

477
G. Avner to A. Levavi (Tel Aviv)

COPY: ISA 130.11/2503/8

Sofia, 1 July 1953

RE: NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE RUSSIANS
AND FURTHER ACTION

I sent you an analysis of the stages of the negotiations here with the last mail. Now I wish to add certain theoretical or academic remarks about the way things have developed so far, and also some thoughts about the future.

(1) Out of sheer interest, we are still trying to investigate the beginning of this entire development which is leading to the renewal of relations. As regards Sofia, the dates are as follows: Stalin died on 9 March,[1] the Russian ambassador returned to Sofia, after a long vacation, about 15 March and already on 4 April he spoke with Razin at the Hungarian reception in the presence of all the diplomats and asked for his opinion on the renunciation of the Doctors' Plot. He may have already known on his return from Moscow that this step was

---

Doc. 476

5. The concluding part of the letter is of a personal nature and has been omitted.

Doc. 477

1. In fact, Stalin died on the night between 5 and 6 March.

expected. The Czech told Razin in the middle of April that the Russian had issued instructions to draw closer to the Austrians and the Israelis,[2] in other words, they already knew then of the expected shift in favour of Austria and in respect of Israel. This means that a decision in principle regarding us was taken in March or in mid-April. At the beginning of May, at the Czech reception, the TASS correspondent told Razin that he 'thinks' there will be a change for the better in relations between the Soviet Union and Israel. The same week the Pole began to 'put out feelers' regarding an approach in writing on our part. On 15 May, at our reception, all the Bulgarians said that we should write such a letter. It was possibly at that stage that they also received instructions to sound us out about the first step.

(2) When the Russian read out the text of their reply to us this week – which you will receive in the original with this mail – saying that the government of Israel approached them on 28 May,[3] it was difficult for Razin and me to suppress our smiles. But it is worth remembering that at our first meeting with him which took place, as I already knew, after they had received a commitment that to outward appearances we would be taking the first step, the ambassador opened by saying: I have been told that you want to see me and tell me something. I wish to hear what you have to say. In other words, even though the Pole had sounded us out etc., he began as if this were our approach to the government of the Soviet Union, and from their letter it appears as if on 28 May the whole matter had begun with our approach to him...

(3) From here I pass on to our last meeting with him, which took place two days earlier than he had previously thought, and that is why I returned from Budapest earlier than I had intended. To tell you the truth – we did not go this time in a particularly good mood because we were certain that they would protest the weakening of our commitment with respect to the pacts. We thought they would do it if only to annoy – even if they accepted the second version in the end. To tell you the entire truth – your telegram on this subject[4] was not exactly encouraging. Among other arguments (What other arguments? What else can one claim?) one can say that these are differences in phrasing – yet the political difference is clear and plain to all. No, we can not justify the weakening of political commitment by pointing to the fact that we accept two purely technical remarks on their part and [in return] omit a certain political sentence regarding the stipulation. What justification is that for weakening our commitment? Even today we do not understand how our Foreign Ministry operates. Instead of planning a political line on such a matter from beginning to end – what happened? Were they more annoyed with Foster [Dulles] a

2. See Doc. 468.
3. See Editorial Note, p. 901.
4. See Doc. 474, n. 4.

fortnight ago, or happier that the affairs with the Russians were being settled? I find it hard to believe that there was a calculated decision to offer more at the beginning and then to retreat. I am afraid that here again we have something which is connected with our whole system of functioning. I shall be glad to be told I am mistaken. With them the change on the question of friendship had certainly been planned beforehand. They told us something which they presumably were not prepared to say in public – owing to their flirtation with the Arabs. When I protested, he answered in stages: first, that their wish to renew relations was a friendly act in itself and there was no need to express this specifically; second, that normal relations and friendly relations were identical; third, that what we were asking for would really appear in the final version, because what he was giving us now was only a draft... fourth, that he would cable our request to Moscow; fifth, that in fact he saw no reason not to include what we were requesting because what was written now and what we were requesting were one and the same thing... Each of these stages was an answer to my arguments. He of course did not reply directly to my argument that it had been included in the first draft and that it had disappeared later. At a certain moment I reminded him that back at our first meeting he had asked whether Israel wanted diplomatic relations or friendly relations; in other words, they were distinguishing between the two (this was in answer to the contention that normal relations and friendship were one and the same thing). He then simply replied that that was not what he had asked, but that he had asked whether Israel wanted only diplomatic relations or also normal relations, and as we replied that we wanted both, the letter spoke of normal relations. That is simply a dialectical lie. In this connection, it is of interest to point out that Tito does indeed distinguish between diplomatic and normal relations. From the extracts I am appending, it appears that he distinguishes between three stages: diplomatic relations, normal relations and friendly relations. So what appears from the Russian's arguments is that they are now moving as far as the second stage. But this too is merely an academic matter.

(4) I would like to try to analyze the content of these issues: Today I think that the Russians' decision regarding us is analogous to their decision regarding the Yugoslavs – and this brings me back to the idea which I cabled immediately following our first meeting with the Russian ambassador when I tried to interpret his question about relations or also friendship – to introduce technical normalization in the mission[s], wherever it does not exist at the moment, that is Belgrade, Athens, Tel Aviv, Berlin, Vienna, and maybe also some South American countries with which relations were broken off a long time ago. This does not mean that the creation of relations will be friendly in content, because it is connected with the solution of a whole set of problems on which they are not prepared to yield. But this formal move makes the impression on public opinion that Russia wants peace, and it therefore constitutes a part of their present peace offensive which consists almost entirely of gestures which cost little but have already paid enormous dividends

among West European public opinion, out of all proportion to their real value. I arrived at this conclusion after my stay in Budapest and my talks there, after seeing that no change and no concessions had taken place in Jewish matters – even minor ones such as organizing the convoy,[5] or in those of the Yugoslavs and diplomatic contacts with the West, and after I saw the text of the Russian reply to our approach from which the word 'friendship' had been omitted. They had undoubtedly informed their satellites of their intention to renew relations with us and with Belgrade, telling them at the same time that this did not mean – at least for now – that concessions had to be made in local questions which are not international – see my talk at the Hungarian Foreign Ministry and my talk with the Pole in Budapest.

I have no doubt that they want to arrive at comprehensive negotiations on the major (international) issues. Perhaps they will be prepared to make a concession here and there (I am certain, for instance, that they are holding the Austrian issue in reserve so as to make a concession there, not now but in the event it suits them within the context of comprehensive negotiations with the Western powers).[6] For the main negotiations they want to prepare the atmosphere and public opinion so that it is favourable to their claims, and their present gestures serve this aim. They want to arrive at a sort of second Yalta – that is, a comprehensive agreement based on the status quo of two blocs, which would give the Russians guarantees against an American–Western attack (that is why what Churchill said about guarantees fitted exactly with their main wishes – because they genuinely want a security agreement for Russia and the satellites). In return for such an agreement they will also be willing to make real concessions here and there (Austria, etc.).

However, the present intention is to prepare the atmosphere and public opinion. Our problems, and those of the Yugoslavs and of Western diplomats, relate to the domestic regime, and here they are not prepared to make any concessions, not now and not later. The claim for compensation for nationalized property is a different matter. It is a matter of money and can be discussed (the French and the Swiss in Sofia). But emigration, *aliya*, exit permits, the activity of the Yugoslav missions within the bloc – all these relate to the domestic regime and contradict the regime and here, at least for the time being, there is no room for concessions. There can be concessions in this field only when the domestic situation, internal pressure demands it – concessions in Germany and perhaps in some other places; but nothing more than that. They do not consider there is any direct connection between preparing the atmosphere for comprehensive negotiations, or even between the comprehensive negotiations themselves, and demands in the sphere of emigration –

---

5. See Doc. 419 and n. 3 there.
6. Negotiations between the USSR and the Western powers over the peace treaty with Austria had been deadlocked for a long time. In 1953, the USSR made some concessions, lifting their controls along the line separating the Soviet and Western zones and announcing that they would bear all the costs of the continued occupation.

because this is connected to the domestic regime; this would be a significant concession in the domestic sphere – and this is not done, certainly not at the stage of gestures and the preparation of public opinion.

From this I conclude that the renewal of relations itself does not herald any significant progress regarding our concerns, either in Russia or in the satellites. Some progress may become possible if the main negotiations result in such a good agreement for the Russians that it could be followed by a certain relaxation in the domestic regime. There is no reason to suppose that the main negotiations, if they do take place, will result so favourably for them. Again, some progress may become possible if the Western powers demand concessions on issues such as Jewish emigration as part of the price of a good agreement. This can not be considered a realistic eventuality – though I think that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should at least consider the possibility of approaching Churchill and asking him to raise the matter in talks with the Russians, if these do take place. I think the effort worthwhile – and if he refuses no serious harm will have been done. I think we owe it to the Jews of Eastern Europe to make this attempt.

How then is an attempt to achieve significant results in Eastern Europe possible? First of all, we have to envisage the resumption of relations with Moscow as an opportunity to return there. I do not consider this in itself more than a resumption of contact. There is, however, a means through which we might possibly gain something from them, namely, by creating a balance of interests which could perhaps make it worthwhile for them to help us here and there. I have already written to you about this. I know all our limitations in this respect, because we are not Finland which, with its strong economy, is in no need of aid from the United States, and we are not even Lebanon – on the contrary, it is because of Lebanon and the Arab states that we are in such need of American help.

In spite of this, I think that we have the possibility and also the moral obligation *vis-à-vis* the Jews of Eastern Europe to do everything possible. We must not despise the small things even if there is no assurance beforehand that we shall gain anything by them. In this connection, it is of interest to note that the Austrian prime minister, a man of the [political] right, in his speech in parliament ten days ago when opening the debate on foreign policy, and when speaking about the need of obtaining some concessions for his country from the Russians, explicitly demanded of the press not to provoke the Russians and not to abuse them, and not only that – he hinted that if any concessions from Russia could be expected, ways should perhaps be sought to do something in the political sphere which would meet Russian interests, so that the Russians would think it more worthwhile for them. He spoke with circumspection, whereas the communist speaker said explicitly that only if Austria did something in the sphere of international relations which would coincide with (not be identical to) Russian interests – might it be expected that Russia would do something for Austria.

I think that through the small matters I mentioned in one of my previous letters one can attempt – no more than that – to create such a favourable balance of interests. In any case, we must not demand of the Russians what we do not demand of the Americans nor of any other power. They all act according to reciprocal interests and actions. And with them the moral–ideological basis is stronger – but in the main it is a matter of political interest. If we do not try a little to do something which they are interested in, we should not be surprised that they do nothing for us, especially when it comes to a scheme where it is subjectively difficult for them to help us – because emigration is against the nature of their regime.

As to immediate action, I propose the following: this is an attempt to build something on the basis of the resumption of relations itself, even though I am not of the opinion – as I have explained – that we can automatically expect achievements following the renewal of relations.

(1) When the resumption is published, the newspapers connected with the coalition parties must be seriously briefed to the effect that our demands of the Soviet Union and the bloc countries concern the future and will not be accompanied by vilification on account of the past, even if there is objective justification for such vilification in connection with past actions of the communist regimes in the various countries.

(2) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should immediately instruct all our representatives in Eastern Europe to bring formally to the attention of the various foreign ministries the written texts of the two notes. Even if these are already known to the foreign ministries, such a step on our part is still worthwhile.

(3) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should immediately instruct all our representatives in Eastern Europe to pay courtesy calls on the Russian ambassadors or acting ambassadors. They will talk of this and that, and of our wish for mutual friendship, etc. It is also worth selecting some capitals (three or four) outside Eastern Europe where the heads of our missions would pay similar calls.

(4) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should instruct our representatives in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania to approach the respective foreign ministries within ten days after the resumption of relations has been made public, and to raise anew demands of secondary importance, such as: Poland – the extension of convoys for the reunification of families; Bucharest – the release of the detained Israeli and permission for the reunification of single women and wives of Israelis with their families; Prague – the release of Oren and Orenstein;[7] Budapest – a convoy for the departure of wives of Israeli citizens. I do not recommend raising the issue of large-scale emigration.

I think this should be carried out in any case, and my calculation is as follows: it is possible that if we approach all the capitals with these demands, one or two of the capitals will turn to Russia to ask whether such a concession

7. See Doc. 476, no. 2.

should be made to Israel at this point of time, and the Russians' answer might perhaps be that small things do not matter, and then we shall have gained some small things.

I am afraid you think I have become a communist or that I think that the Russians are in the right in their policy towards us and in the Slansky trial, etc. I assure you that this is not the case. However, when I consider our situation with respect to the Russians I can not ignore that balance of interests which plays a role in relations between nations and also in the attitude of the United States and Britain towards us. What they do has a reason behind it, and the line taken by the United States at this time, and also that of Britain, shows this clearly. Even Churchill's fine speech was not only 'because they like our looks!'[8] Perhaps we shall not be able to change even the small matters – in that case the conclusion is clear. I append a number of press cuttings in connection with what I have said above.

Gershon Avner

478
M. Sharett to V.M. Molotov (Moscow)[1]

COPY: ISA 130.11/2423/29
Tel Aviv, 6 July 1953

Your Excellency,

1) The government of Israel has of late been aware of a noticeable improvement in the atmosphere surrounding international affairs and of the renewed widespread desire to arrive at peaceful and constructive solutions of the major international issues still pending. In pursuance of its consistent policy to seek the friendship of all peace loving nations and to contribute to the measure of its ability to establish normal and harmonious relations between all peoples, the government of Israel wishes at this juncture to raise the question of the resumption of diplomatic relations between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Israel.

2) The government of the Soviet Union severed its diplomatic relations with Israel after the explosion at the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv of a bomb placed there by unknown criminals and the damage to person and property caused

---

Doc. 477

8. Reference is apparently to Churchill's speech on 11 May 1953, opening the foreign affairs debate in the House of Commons. Speaking of Egypt, Churchill related the history of the negotiations over evacuation of the Suez Canal zone, saying that if the threatening and boastful speeches of the Egyptians were to be translated into actions, the British forces in the area would defend themselves.

Doc. 478

1. For a draft of this letter, see Doc. 474.

thereby. The government of Israel recalls that in its note of 10 February 1953 to the USSR legation in Tel Aviv it expressed its profound regret at the crime committed against the legation and offered its apologies for it as well as full compensation for the injuries and material losses which the legation and its personnel had sustained. The Israeli Police has made every effort to detect the criminals and bring them to justice. It will be recalled that for reasons beyond the control of the Israel Police the investigation of clues on the actual scene of the outrage could commence only fifteen hours after its occurrence. Extensive searches were conducted in the offices of certain organizations as well as in private houses, and scores of persons suspected of possible complicity were detained for interrogation.

The investigation has unfortunately yielded no tangible results so far, but the issue is by no means dormant and the quest for clues is continuing with full vigour in the hope that the apprehension and trial of the criminals and the infliction upon them of condign punishment may yet prove possible.

3) The government of Israel takes this opportunity of recalling its reply of 8 December 1951 to the note of the Soviet Foreign Ministry of 21 November 1951, in which it declared: 'Israel has never agreed and will not agree to support the execution or the preparation of acts of aggression against the USSR or any other peace-loving state.' This policy remains unchanged. Having no hostile feelings towards the USSR, but on the contrary, being anxious to establish and maintain relations of friendship and amity with it, Israel will not be a party to any alliance or pact aiming at aggression against the Soviet Union.

4) The government of Israel formally proposes to the government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that the normal diplomatic relations which were interrupted on 12 February 1953 be now re-established, in a spirit of true international friendship.

I take this opportunity of conveying to Your Excellency the assurance of my highest consideration.

M. Sharett
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel

479
V.M. Molotov to M. Sharett (Jerusalem)

ORIGINAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION: ISA 130.11/2507/5
Moscow, 15 July 1953

Dear Minister,

In connection with your letter of 6 July 1953,[1] I am to inform you as follows:

It will be recalled that on 9 February a bomb was set off by evildoers on the territory of the Soviet legation in Israel, as a result of which an officer of the legation and members of families of some other officers were seriously injured. Consequently, the Soviet government recalled its minister as well as the personnel of its mission in Israel and severed its diplomatic relations with the government of Israel.

On 28 May the government of Israel addressed to the Soviet government a proposal to re-establish diplomatic relations between Israel and the Soviet Union.[2]

In considering this proposal the Soviet government bore in mind that the government of Israel had expressed its deep regret and offered its apologies for the crime committed against the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv and that although the search for the guilty persons had yielded no positive results, the government of Israel, according to its statement had continued its efforts to detect the criminals with a view to their arrest and trial.

The Soviet government also bore in mind the declaration of the government of Israel to the effect that it would be party to no alliance or pact pursuing aggressive designs against the Soviet Union.

Taking into account these assurances of the government of Israel as well as the expression of its anxiety to re-establish relations of friendship with the Soviet Union, and following its policy of maintaining normal relations with other countries and of strengthening the collaboration between peoples, the Soviet government for its own part also declares its desire to have friendly relations with Israel and considers it possible to re-establish diplomatic relations with the government of Israel.

Please accept, Mr. Minister, the assurance of my highest consideration.

V. Molotov

---

1. On 15 July 1953, USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs Molotov sent members of the CPSU Central Committee Presidium the text of the statement on re-establishing Soviet–Israeli diplomatic relations, which was to be published in the press of both countries on 21 July. The text included an exchange of letters between Sharett and Molotov (AVP RF. f.06, op.12, p.19, d.298). On 20 July 1953 Molotov's letter was submitted by the Soviet ambasador in Bulgaria, Bodrov, to the first secretary of the Israeli legation in Sofia, Ben-Zion Razin, and the latter forwarded it the following day to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs (ISA 130.02/2410/18a).
2. See Doc. 474.

480
G.T. Zaitsev to V.A. Zorin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.6, P.15, D.31, LL.26–8
Moscow, 28 July 1953

Agence France Presse, reporting on the resumption of diplomatic relations between the USSR and Israel, alluded to well-informed circles in Tel Aviv to the effect that the Soviet legation would probably be located in Jerusalem, where the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs has recently been transferred. The Arab countries, for their part, are showing some concern about the location of the Soviet legation in Israel; see the statement of the chargé d'affaires of Syria in the USSR, made to me on 24 July of this year, that 'the transfer of the Soviet legation to Jerusalem would be an unfriendly gesture towards Syria and the other Arab countries'.

In 1947 the General Assembly of the UN adopted a resolution, which was supported by the USSR, on the internationalization of Jerusalem, but during the Israeli–Arab war in 1948, the city was occupied by the armies of Israel (the western part) and of Transjordan (the Old City), and the UN resolution on internationalization was never implemented.

On 17 April 1950, the Soviet government issued a statement about Jerusalem which said that the UN resolution of 1947 'satisfied neither the Arab nor the Jewish population of the city, nor the population of Palestine in general. In such conditions the Soviet government no longer considers it possible to support the resolution. At the same time, the Soviet government expresses its confidence that the United Nations will be able to find a solution to the problem of Jerusalem which is acceptable both to the Arab and to the Jewish inhabitants of the city.'[1]

In 1949, the Israeli authorities, in order to strengthen their position in Jerusalem, declared the part of the city occupied by them to be the capital of Israel. At present these institutions are to be found in the Jewish part of Jerusalem: the president of the state, the Knesset (parliament), the government and the ministries. On 12 July this year the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was transferred to Jerusalem, and only the ministry's liaison department with foreign legations remains in Tel Aviv.

The embassies of the US, Britain and France have remained in Tel Aviv and have declined the Israeli government's proposal to move to Jerusalem. The diplomatic legations of most other countries are also in Tel Aviv. According to information in the hands of the Department of the Near and Middle East, in November 1952, only the Dutch legation and the Greek diplomatic representative's office were relocated to Jerusalem.

With the arrival of the Soviet legation in Israel, it seems likely that the Israeli authorities will ask us about housing the Soviet legation in Jerusalem and may

1. See Doc. 313.

justify this by referring to the fact that all of Israel's main central institutions, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are now in Jerusalem, and also that it is hard to find a suitable site for the legation in Tel Aviv, while in Jerusalem there are several buildings owned by the Soviet Union which are suitable for housing our legation.

The establishment of our legation in Jerusalem would evoke sharp displeasure among the Arab states. It could also constitute a pretext for accusing the Soviet Union of supporting Israeli claims to Jerusalem.

On the basis of these arguments we consider it feasible:

1) to open the Soviet legation in Israel in Tel Aviv and deal with the question of the move to Jerusalem afterwards, taking into account the position of other Great Powers with diplomatic missions in Israel;

2) to ask the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to allocate to the legation premises in Tel Aviv at least of equal value to those which the legation rented until relations were broken off.

As for the venue for presenting credentials by our minister to the president of Israel, it is worth bearing in mind the following: the majority of diplomatic representatives used to present their credentials in Tel Aviv, but since the presidential administration moved to Jerusalem, the Dutch and Chilean ministers presented their credentials in Jerusalem on 4 May and 16 June this year respectively.

The Jewish authorities, of course, suggest that we too should present our credentials in Jerusalem. If it is impossible for the Soviet minister to present his credentials in Tel Aviv, we consider that he should be allowed to accept the Israeli authorities' proposal for the presentation to take place in Jerusalem.[2]

G. Zaitsev

481
Meeting: M.I. Ivliev – B. Razin (Sofia, 29 July 1953)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.6, P.15, D.5, L.9

On 29 July of this year, the chargé d'affaires of Israel in Bulgaria, Ben-Zion Razin, asked to be received.

Because the ambassador, Comrade M.F. Bodrov, was unwell, I received Razin.

---

2. Handwritten note at the top of the document: 'To Comrade V.M. Molotov, I consider Zaitsev's proposals (pp. 2, 3) acceptable. Your approval is required, V. Zorin.' Another handwritten note over the text reads: 'To Comrade Zaitsev. To Comrade Abramov. As per the instructions of Comrade V.M. Molotov, we should ignore Avner's application in Budapest regarding change of location of our mission in Israel and assume that it should be located in Tel Aviv. V. Zorin.' See also Doc. 483.

In his conversation with me, Razin said that he was authorized by his government to convey to the Soviet government a request for the granting of an *agrément* to Shmuel Eliashiv, the newly appointed Israeli minister to the USSR. On this occasion he handed over brief biographical notes about Eliashiv.

Razin also asked to be informed of our decision on the request for an *agrément.*

I told Razin that the embassy would tell him as soon as the decision had been taken.

Razin then told me that the publication in Tel Aviv newspapers of the letters of the foreign ministers of the USSR and Israel about the restoration of diplomatic relations had evoked a positive response in all segments of the population. According to him, even the most right-wing papers in Tel Aviv published favourable comments about the re-establishment of relations with the Soviet Union.

The third secretary of the embassy, Comrade I.I. Sedin, was present during this conversation .

Counsellor of the USSR Embassy in Bulgaria
M. Ivliev

Enclosed: original and translation of information on Sh. Eliashiv, attached only to the first copy – 2 pages.[1]

482
Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet

Moscow, 4 August 1953
COPY: AVP RF, F.1, OP.2, P.16, D.20, L.58

ON THE APPOINTMENT OF A.N. ABRAMOV AS ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE USSR IN ISRAEL

Aleksandr Nikitich Abramov is hereby appointed envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the USSR in Israel.

Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR
K. Voroshilov
Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR
N. Pegov

1. Not traced.

483
W. Eytan to A. Eban (New York)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2330/14
Jerusalem, 17 August 1953

For Eban. As instructed by us, Avner approached the Soviet ambassador in Budapest in the matter of opening their legation in Jerusalem. This was after they had informed us in Sofia that they intended to return to Tel Aviv.[1] After the Russians showed such a sympathetic attitude towards you at the reception, and after Tsarapkin even told Rafael that the Soviet Union was persistent in opposing internationalization, it would be good if you too applied pressure on them in this matter. Apart from the well-known arguments, it should be explained to them that opening a new legation in Tel Aviv would make a much worse impression on the public than the non-transfer of the missions already located in Tel Aviv, and most of which, we are certain, will move to Jerusalem in due course. In view of the spirit of Malenkov's generous words regarding us,[2] their return ought not to be a cause of anger among the public. After all, the only basis for the Americans' negative stand is the concept of internationalization, which the Soviet Union rejects. If, nonetheless, they entertain doubts, you can point out that the opening of this legation in Jerusalem in itself does not commit them in principle on the issue of Jerusalem. Act swiftly, because the decision will be taken any day now.[3]

1. See Doc. 480 and n. 2 there.
2. In a speech to the Supreme Soviet on 8 August 1953, Prime Minister Malenkov mentioned Israel as one of the countries with which the Soviet Union wished to maintain good relations. He said that the Soviet government assumed that the renewal of diplomatic relations with Israel would 'facilitate cooperation between the two states'.
3. Eban met with Tsarapkin on 18 August, informed him that Israel favoured the opening of the Soviet legation in Jerusalem, and put forward the arguments laid down in Eytan's telegram. Tsarapkin explained that the matter was not within the competence of the Soviet delegation to the UN, but promised to pass on the information to his government (see A. Lourie to the UN Division, 21 Aug. 1953, ISA 130.11/2512/24).

484
Resumé of Consultations at the Residence of the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs

COPY: ISA 130.02/2458/8
Jerusalem, 2 September 1953
Secret

Jewish reaction to the renewal of trials of Prisoners of Zion[1] is essential, both from a Jewish point of view and in order to activate the non-Jewish response. This reaction must be well-organized and coordinated in the various centres, with the help of various organizations. The major activity should be concentrated in the United States. A special envoy should be sent who will have at his disposal all the necessary material and will be able to guide one of our people there; he will carry out the work (among the names mentioned as operatives: R. Shiloah and R. Dafni). A. Levavi and Isser [Harel] will propose a candidate who will be sent from here to guide them.

a) The crux of our political activity should be directed at the Soviet Union, although we should not neglect appeals to the other bloc countries as well. At the appropriate moment the entire issue should be raised, because both for the Russians and for us a comprehensive handling of all problems is preferable.

b) Only in connection with our prisoners (Oren and Orenstein)[2] should a separate effort also be made. If no positive reply is forthcoming from the Czech Foreign Ministry, we should hint to them at the possibility that the matter will be placed on the agenda of the [UN General] Assembly, and we must ready ourselves and make all the necessary preparations for that eventuality. A hint of our intentions should be given in the first days of the assembly in contacts with the Czech delegation at the UN and also in Prague.

c) We must not make do only with planting the threat of arousing world public opinion. True, this is an effective weapon, but it may also prove a disappointing one. We must also make constructive proposals in both the commercial and the political sphere. We need not expect gifts from the Russians; their reaction is based on whether it is worthwhile for them to meet our demands. A small committee should be convened with the participation of a representative from the Economic [Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], which will examine the possibilities of developing and strengthening economic relations with the bloc.

1. Following the Slansky Trial and the exposure of the alleged Doctors' Plot, the situation of the Jewish communities in Eastern Europe deteriorated. Hungarian and Romanian Jewries suffered most. In Hungary there were many arrests among Jewish community activists, including the head of the community Laios Stoeckler. Activists from the Joint Distribution Committee (Joint) and Zionist organizations were persecuted as well. In Romania the bulk of the arrests were of Zionsts. By the end of 1953, approximately 200 Jews had been detained; some were awaiting trial while others had been sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. For individual cases and Israeli attempts to intervene, see ISA files, 130.11/249/7, 2498/15.
2. See Doc. 476, n 2.

485
G.T. Zaitsev and A.N. Abramov to V.A. Zorin (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.6, P.15, D.25, LL.132–3
Moscow, 2 September 1953
Secret

The office of the representative of the Russian Palestine Society was established by a decision of the USSR Council of Ministers, dated 31 May 1950. The office was to take over the property of the former Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society and administer the property of the Soviet Union.

Ever since the office has been established, the Israeli authorities have been hindering its work and have so far failed to hand over the property of the former Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society and the property belonging to the Soviet Union.

The USSR Academy of Sciences, under whose authority the Palestine Society operates, has repeatedly urged in its letters to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the office's activities in Israel be terminated. The letter from Comrade Topchiev[1] dated 23 December indicated that the Palestine Society owns only a small portion of Soviet property in Israel, that the Israeli authorities have so far failed to hand over any property to the office, and that therefore 'it seems advisable to discuss the office's future work with the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs'. This question was also raised with the Soviet Foreign Ministry in Comrade Topchiev's letters of 16 February, 4 and 16 April and 21 August this year.

When resolving the issue of the office's future activities, it should be borne in mind that we have every reason to demand the transfer of our property from the Israeli authorities, including the property of the former Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society. Negotiations with the Israeli government about this property are not yet concluded, and the closure of the representative's office just now could be taken by the Israeli authorities as a renunciation of our rights to this property.

We also need the office of the representative of the Palestine Society as an information centre because of its location in Jerusalem – which is the seat of the Israeli government – since there are no other Soviet institutions there at present.

In addition, it should be borne in mind that the office was established in accordance with a right which had been acquired by the Russian imperial government. The closure of the representative's office, as proposed by Comrade Topchiev, would mean a renunciation of this right.

---

1. Apparently written in his capacity as chief secretary of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

In this connection, it would be advisable to notify Comrade Topchiev that the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs sees no grounds for the closure of this office and presumes that the Soviet Academy of Sciences will take the necessary measures to staff the office and keep it going.

Draft letter attached.[2]

G. Zaitsev, A. Abramov

486
Meeting: M.F. Bodrov – B. Razin (Sofia, 2 September 1953)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.6, P.15, D.6, L.52

On 2 September, I received the Israeli chargé d'affaires, Ben-Zion Razin, at his request.

Razin informed me that the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs was looking for premises for the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv, and that these would be found by late September or the beginning of October. Razin further noted that the Israeli legation in Rome had been instructed to issue entry visas to the first and second secretaries of the Soviet legation, who will be travelling to Tel Aviv via Italy.

I thanked Razin for this information.

Razin then said that the Israeli minister and second secretary would be going to the Soviet Union in early October this year.

The third secretary of the Soviet embassy, Comrade N.I. Sedin, was also present at the discussion.[1]

Ambassador of the USSR in the People's Republic of Bulgaria
M. Bodrov

Doc. 485

2. For final version see Doc. 487.

Doc. 486

1. Handwritten note at the top of the document: 'Comrades Abramov, Tat'ianchenko, for your information'.

487
V.A. Zorin to A.V. Topchiev (Moscow)

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.6, P.15, D.21, L.134
Moscow, 5 September 1953
Secret

To the Chief Academic Secretary of the Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Comrade A.B. Topchiev,
Re: No. IO-2/02895 of 21 August 1953.[1]

The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers it inadvisable to close down the office of the representative of the Russian Palestine Society in Jerusalem. Such a step could be construed by the Israeli authorities as abandoning our claim to Soviet property in Israel.

The work of the office, in our opinion, should be carried out more energetically. For this purpose we must staff it entirely with well-trained officials as soon as possible.

USSR Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
V. Zorin

488
Memorandum on Soviet–Israeli Trade

COPY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.6, P.15, D.17, L.2
Moscow, 13 October 1953

Trade turnover of the USSR with Israel during the last three years (in millions of rubles):[1]

	1950	1951	1952 (11 months)
Exports from the USSR to Israel	1.3	0.9	0.3
Imports to the USSR from Israel	0.1	0.1	3.8
Trade balance	+1.2	+0.8	-3.5

In 1950–51 we sold to Israel, for pounds sterling: tiles, porcelainware, typewriters, calculating machines, paraffin and carpets; and for local currency: films and literature.

In 1952 films and literature were again sold to Israel.

Doc. 487
1. See Doc. 485.

Doc. 488
1. Apparently prepared with a view to the forthcoming Israel–Soviet trade negotiations (see Docs. 489, 491).

Our purchases from Israel in 1950–[19]51 consisted of essential oils. In the first quarter of 1952 we imported from Israel 6,800 tonnes of oranges at a value of 3.7 million rubles and a trial consignment of bananas at a value of 34,000 rubles.

In late 1952 contracts were signed for the purchase of 15,000 tons of oranges from Israel, at a value of about 9 million rubles, for delivery in the first quarter of 1953.

Israeli oranges are of good quality and can be stored over a long period. They are cheaper than Italian oranges. In contracts signed for 1953 the price of Italian oranges was 640–650 rubles per ton, while Israeli oranges were 605 rubles per ton. Israeli firms supply us with oranges in keeping with the dates specified in the contracts.

Payment for Israeli goods is in pounds sterling. Until recently the local currency realized by us from the sales of films and literature was spent in Israel, in particular for the legation's needs. However, since August 1952, the Bank of Israel has been restricting these accounts by allowing them to be used only to buy real estate in Israel.

In the capitalist world we buy oranges in Italy as well as in Israel.[2]

Head of the Near East Department
I. Efanov

489
Z. Argaman to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/6
Moscow, 23 November 1953

To the Economic [Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]. This morning I was received, together with [Yehuda] Gideon, by Kumykin, the deputy minister of foreign trade. Present were the director of the Department of Trade with the Middle East and the Israeli commercial attaché. The conversation dealt with the possibility of expanding mutual trade and the form this might take. Kumykin emphasized that in recent years trade with us was one-sided and it was therefore desirable to make it reciprocal. He took a positive attitude towards the expansion of trade with us. He found most of our goods suitable for import to the Soviet Union and emphasized textiles in particular. They are ready and willing to discuss an agreement or a commercial treaty between our governments through delegations, while emphasizing that most of their treaties are based on clearing. There are two possible modes of discussion:

1) first a delegation of experts and in the second stage an inter-governmental delegation;

2. Handwritten note at the top of the document: 'Comrade Chistiakova, please make one copy for the USSR legation in Israel, A. Korobochkin, 13.10.53'.

2) a mixed governmental and experts committee which will conduct the discussions simultaneously.

They are ready to accept whichever mode suits us better, but they favour the second one. He proposed that we submit a non-binding written memorandum. After getting your reply on the question of the mode of negotiations, he will bring the matter to the minister and the government. Cable your view as soon as possible.[1]

Argaman

490
Meeting: V.M. Molotov – Sh. Eliashiv (Moscow, 1 December 1953)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.6, P.15, D.4, LL.7–8
Secret

RECEPTION OF ISRAELI MINISTER ELIASHIV, 1 DECEMBER 1953, 16.30

After an exchange of greetings, Eliashiv presented Molotov with his credentials and a copy of the speech he intended to deliver at their presentation. He stated that he would like first of all to say that the government and the Israeli people felt deeply satisfied at the restoration of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. It was an important event in Israel's life.

In response, Molotov remarked on the positive significance of the fact that the Soviet Union and Israel had agreed to renew diplomatic ties and that the Israeli government had undertaken certain obligations consequent upon the restoration of relations with the Soviet Union. We also attached importance to this event, said Molotov.

Eliashiv said that in its relations with the Soviet Union, Israel was continuing its previous policy. The Israeli government hoped that Soviet–Israeli relations would develop successfully.

Molotov expressed the hope that they would develop in accordance with the agreement on the resumption of relations.

Eliashiv would be received by the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet in order to present his credentials at the first opportunity, said Molotov. He would be notified of the date of the reception.

Eliashiv says that afterwards he would request a meeting with Molotov to discuss certain questions.

The discussion, which lasted five minutes, ended there.[1]

Doc. 489

1. Bartur replied that Israel was extremely interested in negotiations between government delegations with the participation of experts. He asked him to clarify what goods were negotiable and under what conditions (see his telegram of 25 Nov. 1953, ISA 130.09/2325/5).

Doc. 490

1 Copies to Malenkov, Molotov, Voroshilov, Khrushchev, Bulganin, Kaganovich, Mikoian, Saburov and Pervukhin.

491
Meeting: A.N. Abramov – M. Sharett (Jerusalem,[1] 2 December 1953)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.6, P.15, D.6, L.73.
Secret

A VISIT TO THE ISRAELI MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MR. SHARETT.

Today at 11 o'clock I arrived in Jerusalem to pay a protocol visit to senior members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to Sharett.

I was first received by Simon, chief of the Protocol Division, who briefly rehearsed with me the ceremony of the presentation of credentials to President Ben-Zvi.[2] He also gave me a list of members of the diplomatic corps, a list of the senior officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the printed edition of the Israeli protocol.

I was then introduced to Eytan, director-general of the Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Levavi, deputy director-general, and Shmorak, head of the East European Division. Discussions with these persons were mainly on matters of protocol. Eytan and Levavi noted that, according to their sources, negotiations in Moscow between the Israeli trade delegation and representatives of the Soviet Ministry for Foreign Trade were progressing successfully[3] and that one could hope for a speedy conclusion of a trade agreement between our countries.

I was received by Sharett at 12 noon. Sharett displayed great courtesy and spoke Russian during the entire conversation. I handed him copies of my credentials and of the speech I was to make at the ceremonial presentation. Sharett glanced through my speech and said that he was pleased to find in it a mention of the desirability of developing cultural and trade relations between our countries. He, too, considered it imperative that cultural and other ties be developed as a precondition for further rapprochement between our countries. He said that the Russian language was fairly widespread among the Jewish population, and there was great interest in Russian culture and science. This, in Sharett's view, should make it easier to bring our countries closer together in the realm of culture.

In this connection I mentioned our intention to publish in Israel a bulletin of the Soviet legation in Russian.

Sharett immediately tempered his rhetoric and said that this question required careful study, and that, evidently, such a publication would be possible on a reciprocal basis, not in terms of language, but of distribution.

Sharett went on to say that Prime Minister Ben-Gurion had definitely resigned and that there were ongoing negotiations among different political

---

1. The meeting took place in Jerusalem, but the document was composed in Tel Aviv.
2. Yitzhak Ben Zvi had been elected Israel's second president on 8 December 1952.
3. In the margin opposite this and the previous paragraph, the following appears in handwriting: 'Comrade Tat'ianchenko, take note', followed by an illegible signature.

groups for the formation of a new government.[4] Ben-Gurion's resignation would be officially announced the following day. He also said that there would probably be difficulties in forming a new government, but he hoped that these would be overcome.

Touching on Israel's general development, Sharett drew my attention to the major projects under way for housing and culture, as well as the growing unity of the Jewish nation. In this respect, they assigned special responsibility to the Jewish youth and the army. Sharett said that the strengthening of the nation was most clearly visible in the increasing use of the Hebrew language. The new generation all spoke Hebrew, said Sharett. He noted, however, that recently the English language had grown in importance as the language of nations with whom Israel is linked by force of economic and other circumstances. For example, large groups of students, military men and other people have recently been sent to the US, Britain and other countries.

In conclusion, Sharett expressed his satisfaction at the restoration of ties between our countries and wished me every success in carrying out my mission. He also promised help in finding premises for the legation.

The discussion lasted 25 minutes. Comrades Fomin and Medianik were also present.[5]

Minister of the USSR in Israel
A. Abramov

492
M. Sharett to Sh. Eliashiv (Moscow)

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/5
Jerusalem, 3 December 1953

My heartiest congratulations.[1] In the course of my explanations concerning the process of building the country, the integration of immigrants from different countries and the inculcation of the language, Abramov asked whether English was not disruptive. I replied in the negative and said that cultural ties with the world were essential for us and that English was a global language and the language of the majority of the Jewish people with whom we were in contact. I added that the languages that were in use in Israel reflected the origins of

---

Doc. 491

4. Ben-Gurion tendered his official resignation on 7 December.
5. For Sharett's record of the conversations, see Doc. 492.

Doc. 492

1. Apparently on Eliashiv's first meeting with Molotov (see Doc. 490). Eliashiv returned to Moscow on 27 November and resumed his position as Israeli minister in the USSR. He presented his credentials officially on 14 December.

the new immigrants, ties with each Diaspora, possibilities of travel and study, dynamics of tourism, etc. There was a time when the main European language of the *yishuv* was Russian. I saw that Fomin grasped the implications fully, but Abramov's glasses protected him. I added that I had been very interested to see in the text of his speech the desire to develop cultural ties. Abramov said that they wanted, for example, to publish a bulletin in Russian on their economic and cultural achievements; I said [it should be done] reciprocally. He asked whether we would publish it in Hebrew in Moscow; and I said we would discuss it; the main thing was reciprocity in actual publication and distribution. Cable your remarks.

Sharett

493
D.A. Zhukov to L.A. Shcherbakov (Moscow)

COPY: GARF, F.7523, OP.85C, D.38, L.95
Moscow, 12 December 1953

To the Secretariat of the Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Comrade L.A. Shcherbakov,

I hereby forward the text of the speech, approved by Comrade V.M. Molotov, to be made by Comrade K.E. Voroshilov in response to the presentation of credentials by the Israeli minister Eliashiv on 14 December 1953.

Chief of Protocol, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs
D. Zhukov

SPEECH TO BE MADE BY K.E. VOROSHILOV IN REPLY TO THE MINISTER OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL AT THE CEREMONIAL PRESENTATION OF HIS CREDENTIALS

Mr. Minister,

I hereby accept your credentials and welcome you as the envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the State of Israel accredited to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

I fully share your view that the restoration of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Israel has positive political significance and is received with satisfaction in both countries. For my part, let me express confidence that Soviet–Israeli relations will develop in the interests of both our countries and in accordance with the agreement that marks the restoration of diplomatic ties between them.

The Soviet Union is consistent in its pursuit of policies of peace and cooperation between all peoples, both large and small. All the peoples of the

multinational USSR, united in a single friendly family, are engaged in a peaceful and creative endeavour designed to promote the further economic and cultural advancement of their homeland. That is why the efforts by other peoples and countries to preserve and strengthen peace will find full understanding and support among the peoples of the Soviet Union.

You can be certain that your efforts to strengthen and develop friendly relations between the State of Israel and the Soviet Union will be supported by the Soviet government.

Thank you, Mr. Minister, for your good wishes to the Soviet people and its government. Let me take this opportunity to wish the people of the State of Israel and its government well-being and prosperity.

494
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Jerusalem)

TEL: ISA 130.11/2496/7
Moscow, 14 December 1953

I presented my credentials to Voroshilov today at noon. Also present were Zorin, Gorkin, Deputy Director of the [Near and Middle] East [Department] Gerasimov, Zhukov and one of his assistants, Chernishov, and on our side Gideon and Levanon.

I made my speech in Hebrew, and Chernishov read out the translation. The main points of my speech were our satisfaction at the renewal of relations, our great interest in having friendly relations, their support of us in the establishment of our state and their swift and full recognition. The dual tasks of our young state were the regeneration of the age-old wilderness, the absorption of the dispersed Jewish people and the creation of a free reborn nation. There was no creativity nor the possibility to create without peace. We remembered the horrors of the last war and therefore we opposed war with all our might, and welcomed the efforts of the Soviet Union and other peace-loving nations to establish lasting peace. Our state was following attentively the creative work of the Soviet Union. Every nation had its own way and these were not identical, but there were basic elements common to their tremendous enterprise and our modest one, and we hoped that what we did would be met with their understanding. We wished the president long life and happiness and the government of the Soviet Union success in its activity for the welfare of all its peoples and citizens.

The president, in his response, wished me success in my post. They were happy at the renewal of relations, hoping they would develop as agreed upon. They would support the efforts for peace of large and small nations. Their multinational country welcomed the efforts of various nations on behalf of

their development. He promised support for my efforts to maintain friendly relations with them, and he was sending his good wishes to the Jewish people and to the State of Israel and its inhabitants, and he wished me success in my work.

We had a private talk with him and with Zorin. The talk lasted for 15 minutes, and was lively, cordial and warm. After the ceremony we had a reception in [his] room, with the participation of the chief of protocol.

[...][1]

Eliashiv

495
A.N. Abramov to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: AVP RF, F.059, OP.30, P.53, D.312, L.4
Tel Aviv, 19 December 1953

An abnormal situation has arisen in the Israeli League for Friendly Relations with the USSR. In February 1953 the right-wing leaders of the Mapam Party (the leftist Zionist workers' party) engineered a split within the league, which led to the formation of two leagues: one headed by representatives of democratic groups and the other by right-wing leaders of the Mapam Party.

From conversations with representatives of both leagues, we have concluded that the split is political. Whereas the progressive groups are in favour of unconditional friendship with the Soviet Union, the Mapam leaders make it dependent on our support for Zionism. The Mapam leaders also want to turn the league into an instrument of their party and to make use of the growing sympathy with the Soviet Union for their party's specific purposes. The leadership of this league is also opposed to unifying the two leagues.

Given these circumstances and the substantial membership of the Mapam league (90,000, according to Ziesling, one of their leaders), we think it best for the time being not to support the activities of either league. For instance, I refused an invitation to take part in a meeting organized by the Mapam league on 11 December in honour of the Soviet legation's arrival in Israel; but I intend to send two members of our legation to a concert organized to mark this event, which will be held on 25 December by the league headed by progressive circles. At the same time, by talking to representatives of both leagues, I shall find out about the situation in their organizations and the mood of the rank-and-file, and will tactfully express a wish to see the two leagues reunited.

Proposals regarding our future position with respect to both leagues will be forwarded separately.

Abramov

1. Last paragraph deals wtih administrative issues.

496
Sh. Eliashiv to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CODED TEL: ISA 130.09/2325/6
Moscow, 21 December 1953

(a) I conducted the conversation with Gromyko in the spirit of the minister's telegram 50.[1] He knows about our matter at the Security Council and said that the Soviet Union had already made itself heard on this. He listened and talked, saying that it was a bad thing when the other party also argued in the name of justice, while the third element did not help but even hindered, and it would be good if we were to come to an agreement with the Arabs. I said it was still worse when the other party was not prepared to speak with us and sought to block every move towards progress. When I asked for their support I received the routine answer that they had a delegation there headed by Vyshinskii which would know what to do.

On the issue of *aliya* I received a negative reply with resolve such as we had never encountered. It was obvious that he was prepared for the question; he immediately became withdrawn and said this concerned their citizens and he was surprised that I had raised the issue. He knew that I was not referring to individual consular cases but to much more extensive emigration, and he categorically repeated that there was no realistic basis for a discussion of this. My impression was that they were waiting for me to put the question and decided to make it clear immediately that there was nothing to discuss. Their policy is apparently to put an end to the negative attitude towards the Jews and to be outwardly friendly to us, intending to mollify their own Jews, but at the same time to oppose *aliya* unequivocally.

(b) Zorin showed interest in what was happening in Israel and in the prospects of a settlement with the Arabs. I mentioned the two issues being

1. Sharett instructed Eliashiv, prior to his scheduled meetings with Gromyko and Zorin, to seek Soviet support for the tripartite draft resolution in the Security Council's discussion of the Jordan River dispute and to raise again the issue of immigration of Soviet Jews, emphasizing the fact that this issue had never been removed from the public agenda (telegram of 20 Dec. 1953, ISA 130.09/2325/5).

   In September 1953 Israel began to implement the first stage of its plan to divert the Jordan River for irrigation in Israel. Shortly afterwards, the Syrian representative tabled a complaint to the Security Council, calling for a suspension of the project. The US, which supported the demand to hold up the excavation, and even went as far as suspending its grant-in-aid to Israel, eventually initiated a tripartite draft resolution calling for a temporary suspension of the project but requested that the UN explore the possibilities of reconciling the interests of all parties. This draft resolution was vetoed by the USSR on 22 January 1954.

clarified at the Security Council and the negative effect of the Qibya resolution,[2] and also our own internal affairs. Finally I raised the matter in your 28[3] and he said he would report it to Molotov. Details in the letter.[4]

Eliashiv

497
Meeting: A.A. Gromyko – Sh. Eliashiv (Moscow, 22 December 1953)

DIARY: AVP RF, F.089, OP.6, P.15, D.4, L.11
Secret

At 3 p.m. today I received Eliashiv for a protocol visit.

After an exchange of greetings, Eliashiv touched on the Palestine question, which is currently under discussion at the Security Council.[1] In particular, Eliashiv said that the Israeli government was not satisfied with the Security Council's resolution regarding the border incident in as much as this decision had considerably increased the powers of Gen. Bennike, the UN chief of staff in charge of monitoring the truce in Palestine. Concerning the discussion at the Security Council of the US, British and French resolution on Syria's complaint against Israel, Eliashiv indicated that the Israeli government did not see this draft as a hindrance to continuing the irrigation project on the Jordan River.

In response to Eliashiv's statement that the Israeli government was interested in the Soviet attitude to this question, I said that the position of the USSR was clearly expressed in the declarations and proposals made by the Soviet delegation to the Security Council. Israel and the Arab states should reach a mutual agreement to settle their differences: it was not a good idea for a third party to interfere in Arab–Israeli relations, particularly if, as sometimes happened, such interference was not intended to help achieve a fair

---

Doc. 496

2. On 14 October, the Israel Defence Forces raided the village of Qibya in the central sector of the Jordanian-held West Bank. The raid followed a series of incidents within Israeli territory in which Israeli citizens were killed and wounded. During the Israeli action houses were blown up and more than 40 citizens killed. The Qibya incident was brought before the Security Council, where Israel came under heavy attack. On 24 October the council passed a resolution finding Israel responsible for violation of the cease-fire provisions and requesting that the UN secretary-general assist and strengthen the organization's truce supervision along Israel's borders.
3. Levavi instructed Eliashiv to respond in the affirmative should the Soviets offer to raise the level of representation of both countries to embassies (telegram of 7 Dec. 1953, ISA 130.09/2325/5). Eventually, both countries raised their level of representation to that of embassies in August 1954.
4. See memorandum of meetings with Gromyko and Zorin, 22 Dec. 1953, ISA 130.11/2492/17. Handwritten note appended: 'Apprise the Israeli desk. 24.12'.

Doc. 497

1. See Doc. 496, nn. 1. and 2.

settlement. Eliashiv tried to explain the tension in Arab–Israeli relations entirely as a result of Arab unwillingness to engage in peace negotiations.

Further, Eliashiv touched upon the question of Jewish emigration to Israel and expressed the desire that the Soviet government look favourably upon requests by Jewish citizens of the USSR for permission to emigrate to Israel.

I replied immediately by saying that it was not entirely clear to me why the minister had raised the question concerning Soviet citizens. I noted further that I did not see any basis for a fruitful discussion of the issue.

Eliashiv asked whether it might be advisable to handle the matter through consular channels.

I replied that, as I understood it, the question was not of a straightforward consular nature.

The remainder of the discussion, which lasted 15 minutes, dealt with protocol.

Comrade A.I. Tat'ianchenko, the first secretary in the Near and Middle East Department, was present.

USSR Deputy Foreign Minister
A. Gromyko

498
Report by Sh. Eliashiv

COPY: ISA 130.11/2496/18
Moscow, 30 December 1953
Confidential

(A) *Jews*

We have had a number of opportunities to ascertain the mood of the Jews here and their situation. Argaman held several conversations with people whom he knew previously, and he had a meeting with one Jew whom we did not know before. There was a lengthy conversation with the journalist Ralph Parker, who has taken an interest in this question for some time, one meeting of Mrs. Eliashiv with a woman she had met previously, and there are Levanon's notes from his journey. There were also conversations with the rabbi.[1]

Putting all this together, it can be summed up as follows: At the beginning of 1953 the mood was heavy; there was a sense of depression; Jews tried to stick together, not to raise their voices. There was an unsympathetic atmosphere around them. It was not felt at all or was felt only slightly in educated circles and in places with a large number of Jewish workers, but it found greater expression among the masses. In Moscow the Jews would hear threats

1. See Doc. 128, n. 14.

that they would all be expelled from the capital. One person said that the term of abuse 'Jewish doctor' was used among children, similarly to the epithet 'Fritz' during the war. At the same time, according to Parker, there were also other manifestations. Precisely because the Jews felt uncomfortable, many non-Jews tried to display friendship towards them. And this, too – in spite of all the differences – was reminiscent of what had occurred during the war. In these months the synagogue in Tbilisi was closed down. Afterwards, it was reopened and the chandeliers and other valuables that had been there were returned. The severance of relations with Israel was also bitter news for the Jews and exacerbated their feelings at that time.

Later on, with the freeing of the doctors, great relief was felt. Everything passed like a nightmare, and the Jews do not at present feel any ill will towards them. We have already cabled you the news that Professor Lina Shtern was freed.[2] This may have been done within the general framework of the amnesty. Ralph Parker claims that he saw her with his own eyes, and there is therefore no place for further investigations on this point. The renewal of relations with Israel was greeted with great joy, [and] afterwards they followed developments. Every item in the paper about the arrival of the minister, his visit to Molotov, was a source of encouragement. The report on the presentation of credentials was the zenith. It generated a wave of delight and enhanced Jewish self-awareness. There were some who compared the report to earlier reports of a similar nature regarding other ambassadors, counting the lines and the number of words. One Jewish woman, whom Mrs. Eliashiv had known earlier, in an operative sphere, took advantage of a moment when they were left alone in the room, fell on her neck in tears, kissed her, and said: 'How happy we all are that you have come back again.'

However, fundamental changes have not taken place. This woman said what she did only when there was no third person listening. And in the publicity being given to the new university,[3] when they list the various peoples studying there and show their group photographs, you will not find 'Jew' among the list of nationalities.

(B) In the Synagogue

One Sabbath, after the presentation of credentials, I went with [Yehuda] Gideon to the synagogue. We had informed them in advance of our arrival. The synagogue gives a cleaner and handsomer impression than it did before. You do not see the neglect that previously had such a depressing effect. They made some repairs. There were quite a large number of worshippers, more than I had thought I would find on an ordinary Sabbath, all of them elderly. Many greeted us, some with a handshake, on our way to the podium. As usual, they honoured us by calling us up to the Tora, Gideon for the sixth portion of

2. A former member of the presidium of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, Shtern was the only defendant in the trial of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee not sentenced to death.
3. On 1 September 1953 the new building of Moscow University was inaugurated.

the reading and myself for the reading of the *haftara*.[4] I spoke a bit with the rabbi. He was franker than at any time in the past. The tension we had seen in him at the last meeting before our departure was gone. He welcomed us back and said in Hebrew: 'We are expecting deliverance', and asked whether there was hope for *aliya*. To my question about the situation here, he said: '*Mir hobn ibergelebt zeyer finstere teg*,'[5] but now that period has passed. He asked, referring to the bomb in the Soviet legation in Tel Aviv: 'Well, has it turned out that it was nothing? Was it a provocation?' To my question as to whether it would be convenient for him if I were to visit some time for a conversation, he replied in the affirmative and suggested that I phone first.

After the Tora reading the rabbi approached the rostrum and himself read the Prayer for Peace, which he had composed. He reads this prayer on every Sabbath and its text in Hebrew and Russian is on a slate on the wall. The cantor offered the benediction for Voroshilov and Malenkov. In the past this was done for Stalin only.

As we left, one Jew asked us about his relative who lives in Jerusalem. When I asked for the name of my interlocutor he immediately turned away.

(C) Israel

You will not find any more insulting remarks about Jews in the press, nor have we seen so far items of news from Israel or articles about Israel in the former style. I can not speak about the future, but I am stating a fact that this has been the case till now. As to the prime minister's resignation,[6] there were two news items with no commentary. Not a single word appeared in the press about the

---

4. Having been given the honour of reading from the *haftara* in the Moscow synagogue, Eliashiv wrote the following letter to Sharett on 28 December 1953:

   ISA 93.39/450/5
   Secret/Personal
   To: Minister of Foreign Affairs
   From: Envoy of Israel, Moscow
   Dear Moshe,

   What do you say about this?

   The day before yesterday, on Saturday, I visited the synagogue. The weekly Tora portion was from Exodus. I was honoured by *maftir* [the reading of the *haftara*]. And these were the verses read while I was standing on the podium: 'My Lord, why have you done evil to this people? Why have you sent me? From the time I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name he did evil to this people, but you did not rescue your people' (Exodus 5:22).

   Naturally the faithful will say that the same reading says 'Let my people go' and that in every matter the end is what determines, and in the end — the end is known. And when these verses were read, I had the feeling that many of the worshippers thought what I was thinking at that moment.

   Yours in friendship,

   Sh. Eliashiv

5. Yiddish: 'We have been through very dark days'.
6. For Ben-Gurion's resignation, see Doc. 491 and n. 4 there.

Qibya debate at the Security Council.[7] As to the Jordan River project, there was one telegram on the Tripartite Proposal which also did not appear in all papers.[8] They did not report at all on Vyshinskii's appearance in this matter. His second appearance at the Security Council was reported in the papers, as we have already informed you by telegram.

Sh. Eliashiv

7. See Doc. 496 and n. 2 there.
8. See Doc. 496 and n. 1 there.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

ABDALLAH, King of Transjordan, 1946–48; King of Jordan 1948–51; named commander-in-chief of Arab armies which invaded Palestine; maintained secret ties with Israel in years that followed; assassinated on 20 July 1951.

ABRAMOV, Aleksandr Nikitich, counsellor, USSR legation in Israel, 1952–53; from 4 December 1953, Soviet minister in Israel.

ACHESON, Dean Gooderham, US under-secretary of state, 1945–47; secretary of state, 1949–53.

ADENAUER, Konrad, chancellor of Federal Republic of Germany, 1949–63; foreign minister, 1951–55.

AGARONOV, Reuben, Soviet vice-consul in Beirut.

AHARONOV, Shneur, member, executive committee, Magen Society.

AHARONOVICH (*see* Aranne)

ANDERS, Wladyslaw, commander of Polish forces in Middle East and Italy during World War II; became a leading figure among anti-communist Poles who refused to return to their homeland after the war.

ANKUDINOV, Vladimir Mikhailovich, chairman, Intourist, 1947–69.

ANTIPOV, Vasilii, director of hospices, Orthodox Palestine Society.

ANTONII (Senkevich), Archimandrite, head of Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Palestine on behalf of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, 1937–48.

ANTONOV, Aleksei Innokent'evich, Soviet army general, first deputy chief of staff.

ARANNE (Aharonovich), Zalman (Zyama) (1899–1970), general secretary of Mapai, 1945–51; member, Israel delegation to UN General Assembly, 1950.

ARGAMAN, Zeev (1903–83), counsellor at Israeli legation in USSR, October 1950–October 1952; served as chargé d'affaires in interim period between Namir's return to Israel and Eliashiv's arrival in Moscow in 1953.

ARGOV, Meir, MK Mapai, chairman Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee.

AROKH, Arye, first secretary, Israeli legation in USSR, July 1950–February 1953.

ATROSHCHENKOV, Pavel Samoilovich, deputy director, Consular Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1942–46.

ATTLEE, Clement Richard, British prime minister, 1945–51.

AUSTIN, Warren Robinson, US ambassador to the UN, 1947–53.

AVIDAN (Walter), Moshe, chief assistant, East European Division, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1949–50; deputy director-general, East European Division, 1950; first secretary, chargé d'affaires, Israeli legation in Romania, from 1950.

AVIDAN (Walter), Yosef, attaché, Israeli mission in Hungary; expelled in January 1953.

AVNER (Hirsch), Gershon, director, West European Division at Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs until March 1952; chargé d'affaires in Hungary and Bulgaria, from October 1952.

AVNON (Bornstein), Zvi, head, Consular Division, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from 1949.

AVRIEL (Überall), Ehud (1917–80), minister to Czechoslovakia and Hungary (1948–49) and to Romania (1950).

al-AZR, Anis, Egyptian minister to USSR, 1950–53.

AZZAM, Abd al-Rahman, Egyptian diplomat and politician; secretary-general, League of Arab States, 1945–52.

BAKULIN, Ivan Nikolaevich (1906–63), USSR ambassador to Afghanistan, 1943–47; head, Middle East Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1947–49.

al-BANDAK, Abdallah, Palestinian Arab communist leader; member, Central Committee, Palestine Communist Party, 1936–43; member, Central Committee, League for National Liberation, from 1944.

BARANOV, Leonid Semenovich, deputy head, Department of International Relations, AUCP(b) Central Committee, 1948–49.

BARCHACZ, Alexander, Polish ambassador to Bulgaria.

BARNEA, Yisrael, colonel, military attaché, Israeli legation in USSR, October 1949–September 1950.

BAR-YEHUDA, Yisrael, MK, Ahdut Haavoda; secretary, Tel Aviv Labour Council, 1946.

BARZILAI, Yisrael, member of Central Committees of Hashomer Hatsair and Mapam; Israeli minister in Poland, 1948–51.

BAZAROV, Semen Tarasovich, deputy head and subsequently head of Middle East Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1950–53.

BEJERANO, Moshe, commercial attaché and counsellor at Israeli legation in USSR, August 1948–September 1949.

BEN-AHARON, Yitzhak, MK; political secretary of Ahdut Haavoda–Poale Zion; member, Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee.

BENEŠ, Eduard, president of Czechoslovakia, 1935–38 and 1945–48; during WWII recognized by Allies as head of Czechoslovak government-in-exile; returned to Czechoslovakia as prime minister prior to being elected president.

BEN-GURION, David (1886–1973), chairman of Jewish Agency Executive, 1935–48; chairman of Vaad Leumi, April–May 1948; prime minister and minister of defence of provisional government of Israel, May 1948–March 1949; subsequently, prime minister and minister of defence of State of Israel.

BENTOV, Mordechai, MK Mapam; editor of *Al Hamishmar* and member of World Executive of Hashomer Hatsair; member, Zionist Political Advisory Committee at Lake Success, 1947; minister of labour and reconstruction, 1948–49.

BENTSUR (Peterfy), Shmuel, chargé d'affaires, Israeli legations in Hungary and Bulgaria until June 1952; acting director and subsequently director, East European Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel.

BEN-ZVI, Yitzhak (1884–1963), chairman, Vaad Leumi 1931–48; member of Provisional Council of State of Israel, 1948; MK, Mapai, 1949–52; president of State of Israel, December 1952–63.

BERGELSON, David, Yiddish writer; member, Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee; member, *Eynikeyt* editorial board; arrested with other Yiddish writers in 1949 and executed, 1952.

BERGER, Binyamin–Herzl, MK, Mapai, journalist; member, *Davar* editorial board from 1935.

BERIA, Lavrentii Pavlovich, people's commissar for internal affairs, 1938–46; member, Politburo, 1941–53; minister of internal affairs, March–June 1953.

BERLIGNE, Eliahu Meir, one of founders of Knesset Israel; member of Vaad Leumi and Provisional State Council.

BERMAN (Radai), Haim, secretary, Political Department, Jewish Agency for Palestine, 1947–48; secretary-general, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 1948–March 1952.

BERNADOTTE, Folke, UN mediator for Palestine; assassinated 1948.

BEVIN, Ernest, British foreign secretary, 1945–51.

BIRECKI, Henryk, Polish representative at UN, 1953–54.

BODROV, Mikhail Fedorovich, Soviet ambassador to Bulgaria, 1948–54.

BOGDANOV, Georgi K., Bulgarian envoy to Israel.

BOGOMOLOV, Aleksandr Efremovich, deputy USSR minister of foreign affairs, 1950–52.

BRILEJ, Jože, head, Political Department, Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs until 1950; assistant, minister of foreign affairs, 1950; ambassador to UK, 1950–53.

BRODETSKY, Selig, member, Jewish Agency executive in London and head, Political Department, 1928–48; president, Board of Deputies of British Jews from 1939; president, Hebrew University, 1949–51.

BUDENNYI, Semen Mikhailovich, Soviet Civil War hero, marshal of Soviet Union; commander of cavalry, 1943–53; Presidium member, USSR Supreme Soviet.

BUEV, M., deputy head, Legal Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1947.

BUGHICI, Simon, Romanian ambassador to USSR until 1952; foreign minister from 1952.

BUNCHE, Ralph Johnson, principal secretary, UN Palestine Commission, 1948; acting UN mediator for Palestine, September 1948 to August 1949; organized and chaired Israeli–Arab negotiations of 1949 in Rhodes and at border points, which

resulted in armistice agreements between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

BUSHUEV, P.A., deputy head, Protocol Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

BYRNES, James Francis, US secretary of state, 1945–47.

CADOGAN, Alexander George Montagu, British permanent under-secretary of state for foreign affairs; representative at the UN until 1950.

CARLEBACH, Azriel, founder and editor-in-chief, *Maariv*, 1948–56.

CECIL, Edgar Algernon Robert Gascoyne, British statesman, president, League of Nations, 1923–45.

CHIGAR'KOV, N.N., director, Middle East Department, VOKS.

CHURCHILL, Winston Leonard Spencer, leader of British Conservative Party; prime minister and minister of defence, 1940–45.

CIOROIU, Nicolae, Romanian minister in Israel, 1949–52.

CLARK KERR, Archibald John (Lord Inverchapel), British ambassador to USSR, 1942; ambassador to US, 1946–48.

CLAYTON, Gilbert Falkingham, brigadier-general, chief secretary, British government in Palestine, 1922–25.

CORDIER, Andrew Wellington, executive assistant to UN secretary-general, 1946–62; coordinator, UN activities with special responsibility for General Assembly; special representative of secretary-general to Korea, 1950–52.

CREECH JONES, Arthur, British secretary of state for colonies; British representative at UN debate on cessation of Palestine mandate in 1946 and 1947–48.

CRIPPS, Richard Stafford, British ambassador to USSR, 1940–42.

CRUM, Bartley Cavanaugh, consultant, American delegation to UN Conference, San Francisco, 1945; member, Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry, 1945–46.

DAVIS, Monett Bain, US ambassador to Israel, 1951.

De GAULLE, Charles André Joseph Marie, leader of the 'Free French' from 1940 to 1944; president in 1945 and 1958–69.

DEKANOZOV, Vladimir Grigor'evich, deputy people's commissar for foreign affairs, 1939–47; USSR ambassador to Germany, 1940–41; arrested on 30 June 1953 and executed together with Beria in December 1953.

DENISOV, Andrei Ivanovich, chairman VOKS, 1948–56.

DIMITROV, Georgi, secretary-general of Comintern, 1935–43; secretary-general, Bulgarian Communist Party, 1945–49; prime minister of Bulgaria, 1946–49.

DINABURG (Dinur), Ben-Zion, Israeli minister of education and culture, 1951–55.

DOBKIN, Eliahu (Il'ia), head of Immigration Department, Jewish Agency, during WWII; member, Zionist Central Council; head of Jewish Agency Organization, Youth and Hechalutz Department.

DUBIN, Mordechai, Agudat Yisrael leader in Latvia; chairman, Jewish Committee of Latvia, 1920–44; arrested and deported, 1940; released 1942 and re-arrested in 1948; died in a camp.

DUBINSKY, David, US labour leader; member, central executive board, International Ladies Garment Workers' Union.

DUCE, James Terry, geologist; director, Foreign Division, Petroleum Administration for War, 1941–43; vice-president in charge of government relations, Arabian–American Oil Company (ARAMCO), 1940–58.

DULLES, John Foster, member, US delegation to UN General Assembly, 1948; adviser to secretary of state at Council of Foreign Ministers, London 1945–47, Moscow 1947, Paris 1949; consultant to secretary of state, 1950; secretary of state, 1953–59.

EBAN, Abba (Aubrey S.) (b. 1915), Israeli representative to the UN and ambassador, 1949–59; ambassador to US, June 1950–59; subsequently held posts of minister of education, deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs.

EDEN, Robert Anthony, dominions secretary, 1939; foreign secretary, 1940–45, 1951–55; prime minister 1955–57.

EFANOV, I., head of Near East Department, Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

EINSTEIN, Albert, Jewish physicist, winner of Nobel Prize, 1921; fled Nazi Germany for US in 1933; championed Zionist cause; was offered and refused presidency of State of Israel in 1952.

EISENHOWER, Dwight David, supreme commander, Allied Powers in Europe, 1950–52; US president, 1953–61.

ELATH (*see* Epstein)

ELIASH, Mordechai, member of Israeli delegation to UN, 1948; minister to Great Britain, 1949–50.

ELIASHIV (Friedman), Shmuel (1899–1955), director, East European Division, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1948– 50; minister to Czechoslovakia and Hungary, June 1950–April 1951; from June 1951, minister to USSR.

ELKHOVSKII, Vladimir Evgen'evich, member of Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem.

ELMALEH, Avraham Raphael Ben-Zion, municipal councillor in Jerusalem.

EPSHTEIN, Shakhno, secretary, Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee and chief editor of its publication *Eynikeyt* until his death in 1945.

EPSTEIN (Elath), Eliahu (1903–90), head, Middle East Division at Political Department of Jewish Agency for Palestine until 1945; director, Jewish Agency office in Washington, 1945–48; special representative of Israel in US, 1948–49; Israeli ambassador to US, June 1949–50; Israeli minister, then ambassador to Great Britain from June 1950.

EPSTEIN, Elias Maurice, director, Publicity Department, Jewish National Fund until 1953.

EREM (Kazarnovski), Moshe, MK; co-founder of Mapam.

ERENBURG, Il'ia Grigor'evich, Soviet writer and journalist, member of Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.

ERSHOV, Pavel Ivanovich (1914–81), counsellor, USSR embassy in Turkey, 1944–48; minister to Israel, 1948–53.

EVATT, Hebert Vere, head, Australian delegation to Third Session of UN General Assembly and session president, 1948–49.

EYRES, Harry Maurice, on staff of UK embassy in Damascus, 1946; UK embassy in Ankara, 1946.

EYTAN, Walter (b. 1910), director-general, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel from 1948 to 1959.

FABREGAT, Enrique Rodriguez, permanent representative of Uruguay to UN from 1947; member, UNSCOP.

FADEEV, Aleksandr Aleksandrovich, general secretary, Union of Soviet Writers, 1946–54.

FARUQ, King of Egypt; deposed 1952 by Free Officers.

FEDORIN, Mitrofan Petrovich, second secretary, USSR mission in Israel, 1948–50; VOKS representative in Israel.

FEFER, Itsik (Isaak Solomonovich), Soviet Yiddish poet; secretary, Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, 1945–48; arrested December 1948 and executed together with other members of committee, 12 August 1952.

FELLER, Abraham Howard, general counsel and director, Legal Department of UN from 1946; legal adviser to UN committees and conferences, 1946–51.

FISCHER, Ruth (Golke, Elfriede), Austrian communist; member, Presidium of Comintern; emigrated to US in 1941.

FISHMAN (Maimon), Rabbi Yehuda Leib Hacohen, Israeli minister of religion, 1948–52.

FORRESTAL, James, US under-secretary of navy, 1940–44; secretary of navy, 1944–47; secretary of defense, 1947–49.

FRIEDBERG (Prihar), Zvi, postmaster general of Israel, 1948–51.

FRIEDMAN (*see* Eliashiv)

FRUMKIN, Aleksandr Naumovich, Soviet scientist; member USSR Academy of Sciences; member, Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee and Anti-Fascist Committee of Soviet Scientists.

GARREAU, Roger, president, UN Trusteeship Council, 1949–50.

GELBER, Lionel (1907–89), political adviser to Jewish Agency in New York, 1945–48.

GENIN, Izrail' Adol'fovich, Soviet orientalist.

GERASIMOV, Pavel Ivanovich, deputy head, Near and Middle East Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1953–54.

GLUBB, John B., British military officer; chief of general staff, Transjordanian/Jordanian Arab Legion, 1939–56.

GNEDYKH, Vladimir Vasil'evich, member, USSR legation staff in Cairo.

GOLDBERG, Ben-Zion, American Jewish journalist and writer; active during WWII in Jewish Committee for Russian War Relief; headed National Committee for American-Soviet Friendship.

GOLDMANN, Nahum (1894–1982), member, Jewish Agency Executive and WZO Executive; representative, Jewish Agency in Washington during World War II; chairman (from 1936) and president (from 1953) of the World Jewish Congress.

GOLDSTÜCKER, Eduard, Czechoslovak minister to Israel, 1950–51.

GORKIN, Aleksandr Fedorovich, secretary, Presidium, USSR Supreme Soviet, 1938–53.

GORKY, Maxim, Russian writer.

GOTTWALD, Klement, Czechoslovak deputy premier, 1945–46, premier 1946–48; president of Czechoslovakia, 1948–53.

GREENBERG, Chaim (1889–1953), member, Jewish Agency Executive; director, Department for Education and Culture in Diaspora, World Zionist Organization.

GRIBANOV, Mikhail Grigor'evich, counsellor, Soviet military administration in Germany, 1947–49; deputy head, then head, Third European Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1949–55.

GROMYKO, Andrei Andreevich (1909–89), USSR ambassador to US, 1943–46; USSR deputy minister of foreign affairs and USSR representative to UN, 1946–48; USSR first deputy minister of foreign affairs, 1949–52; USSR ambassador to UK, 1952–53.

GROSS, Ernest Arnold, US deputy ambassador to UN, 1949–53.

GROSSMAN, Meir, member, Jewish Agency Executive; from 1948, director, Jewish Agency Economic Department.

GROTEWOHL, Otto, prime minister, German Democratic Republic from 1949.

GRUENBAUM, Yitzhak (1879–1970), member, Jewish Agency Executive, director of its Labour Department, 1935–48; chairman, Jewish Agency's Rescue Committee during World War II; minister of interior, 1948–49.

GUSEV, Fedor Tarasovich (1905–86), head, Second European Department, USSR People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, 1941–42; USSR ambassador to Great Britain, 1943–46; USSR deputy minister of foreign affairs, 1946–53.

HACOHEN, David, delegate to UN General Assembly, 1948.

HAKKI, Badi, Syrian chargé d'affaires in Moscow.

HAMLIN, Isadore, press officer, Jewish Agency Office in Washington, 1945–49; from 1949 official, Jewish Agency executive.

HARARI, Yizhar, MK, Progressive Party; member, Constitutional Committee, Provisional Government Council, 1948.

HARE, Raymond Arthur, department director, Office of Near Eastern and Indian Affairs, US Department of State, 1949; deputy assistant to secretary of state for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs, 1949.

HARMER, Yolande ('P'), Zionist undercover agent in Egypt from 1945 to 1948; worked in an official capacity as a correspondent for the Jewish Agency news service.

HAZAN, Yaacov, delegate to Zionist congress from 1928; co-founder of Hashomer Hatsair in Israel and of Mapam.

HENDERSON, Loy Wesley, director, Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs, US State Department, 1945–48.

HERZL, Theodor, founder and first president of the World Zionist Organization, 1897–1904.

HERZOG, Chaim (Vivian) (1918–97), member of Jewish Agency Political Department, in charge of army and security affairs, 1947–48; head of Israel Defence Forces Intelligence Department, July 1948–April 1950.

HOROWITZ, David, director, Economic Department of Jewish Agency, 1935–48; liaison officer to UNSCOP; member of Jewish Agency delegation to Lake Success.

al-HUSAYNI, Amin, mufti of Jerusalem, 1922, chairman, Supreme Muslim Council; founder of Arab Higher Committee, 1936; president, Supreme Council of Arab Government in Gaza and chairman of revived Arab Higher Committee after WWII.

al-HUSAYNI, Jamal, president, Palestinian Arab Party; member of Arab Higher Committee. 1934; led Arab delegation at London Round Table Conference in 1939; Palestine representative to Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry, headed delegations to London and UN; foreign minister in Gaza government.

IAKOVLEV, Vladimir Grigor'evich; counsellor, USSR embassy in Poland, 1945–48.

IDELSON, Beba, Mapai MK, deputy speaker of Knesset; general secretary, Women Workers' Council.

IGNAT'EV, Semen Denisovich, USSR minister of state security, 1951–53.

ILANIT, Feige, member, Mapam; member, Histadrut council; active in League for Friendly Relations with USSR.

IL'ICHEV, Ivan Ivanovich, deputy head, Third European Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1948–49.

INVERCHAPEL, Lord (*see* Clark-Kerr)

IVLIEV, M.I., counsellor, USSR embassy in Bulgaria, 1953.

JEBB, H.M. Gladwyn, British permanent representative at UN until March 1953.

JOHNSON, Herschel, US representative on UN Security Council, 1946–48; deputy chief of US mission to UN, 1947–48; alternate US representative to General Assembly Special Session on Palestine, 1947.

JOSEPH, Bernard (Dov), MK, Mapai; adviser to Political Department of Jewish Agency; minister of supply and rationing, 1949–50.

KADDAR, Shlomo, counsellor, Israel legation in Belgium, 1951–53.

KAGANOVICH, Iu.M., chairman, Mezhdunarodnaia Kniga.

KAGANOVICH, Lazar' Moiseevich, member, Politburo, 1930–57; deputy chairman, USSR Council of Ministers, 1938–57.

KALININ, Mikhail Ivanovich, chairman, USSR Supreme Soviet, 1923–46.

KALUGIN, M.P., representative in Israel of Russian Palestine Society, USSR Academy of Sciences, 1951–52.

KAPLAN, Eliezer, Jewish Agency executive from 1933 and treasurer until 1948; minister of finance from 1948; deputy prime minister, 1952.

KAPLANSKY, Shlomo, head, League for Friendly Relations with USSR; member, Mapam, president, Israel Institute of Technology (Technion), 1932–50.

KAPUSTIN, Aleksei Nikolaevich, counsellor, USSR embassy in US, 1945–53.

KARPOV, Gennadii Nikolaevich, first secretary, USSR embassy in Brussels.

KARPOV, Georgii Grigor'evich (1897–1967), chairman, Council for Russian Orthodox Church Affairs, USSR Council of Ministers, 1943–60.

KATZNELSON (*see* Nissan)

KAVTARADZE, Sergei Ivanovich (1885–1971), head, Middle East Department, People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, 1941–43; deputy people's commissar for foreign affairs, 1943–45.

KEHAT, Moshe, attaché, Israeli legation in Moscow.

KENEN, Isaiah (Si), public relations officer, American Jewish Conference, 1958–50; director of information, Israeli delegation to UN until 1954.

KHAIKIN, S.N., chief editor of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.

KHANGULOV, Viktor, first secretary, USSR legation in Lebanon.

KHEIFETS, Grigorii Markovich, Soviet intelligence officer in 1920s–30s; served in Germany, Italy and US, 1941–44, acted as Soviet vice consul in San Francisco; from 1947, deputy secretary, Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee; arrested 1948, and in August 1952 sentenced to 25 years in labour camps.

KHOLODKOV, V.A., chairman, Executive Committee, Soviet Red Cross and Red Crescent.

KHRUSHCHEV, Nikita Sergeevich, Politburo member from 1939; secretary, AUCP(b) from 1949; after Stalin's death elected first secretary, CC CPSU.

al-KHURI, Faris, representative of Syria in UN, 1946–48; Syrian prime minister, 1944–45 and 1954–55.

al-KILANI, Rashid Ali, Iraqi politician; prime minister, 1933, 1940–41.

KIMCHE, Jon, military correspondent, *Observer* and Reuters, 1941–51; editor, *Tribune*, 1942–46; editor, *Jewish Observer* and *Middle East Review* from 1952.

KISELEV, Evgenii Dmitrievich, Soviet consul-general in New York, 1943–45.

KISLOVA, L.D., member, VOKS presidium.

KLINOV, Yeshayahu (1890–1963), director, Press and Information Department, Jewish Agency, 1939–48; director, Department for Broadcasting, Press and Films, Israel Ministry of Interior, 1948–50.

KNATCHBULL HUGESSEN, Hugh Montgomery, British ambassador to Turkey, 1939–44.

KOHN, Leo (Yehuda Pinhas), political secretary, Jewish Agency, 1934–48; political adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from 1948.

KONEV, Ivan Stepanovich, marshal of Soviet Union; commander in chief of USSR ground forces, 1946–50; USSR deputy minister of defence, 1946–51.

KONZHUKOV, Ismail Bedreddinovich, deputy head, Consular Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1948.

KOOK, Hillel (Bergson, Peter), MK, Herut, leader of Revisionist Hebrew Committee of National Liberation.

KORNEICHUK, Aleksandr Evdokimovich, chairman, Ukrainian SSR Union of Soviet Writers, 1938–41 and 1946–53; UkSSR commissar for foreign affairs, 1944.

KOSIAKINA, Iu.F., acting head, Middle East Department, VOKS.

KOSTYLEV, Mikhail Alekseevich, counsellor, USSR embassy in Turkey, 1942–44.

KOSYGIN, Aleksei Nikolaevich, member, Politburo, CC AUCP(b), 1948–52; 1946–53, deputy chairman, USSR Council of Ministers.

KOT, Stanislaw, ambassador, Polish government-in-exile to USSR, 1941–42; state minister in Middle East, 1942–43; minister of information, Polish government-in-exile, 1943–44; Polish ambassador to Italy, 1945–47.

KREIZER, Iakov Grigor'evich, Soviet military officer, colonel–general; member, Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee presidium.

KROCK, Arthur, Washington correspondent, *New York Times*, 1932–53.

KUBOVITSKY, Leon (*see* Kubovy)

KUBOVY, Arye Leon (1896–1966), during WWII, head, Rescue Department, World Jewish Congress; Israeli minister in Czechoslovakia, 1951–52.

KUIBYSHEV, Valeriian Vladimirovich, chairman, Supreme Council of National Economy, 1926–30, subsequently chairman, State Planning Committee (Gosplan), until his death in 1935.

KUKIN, Aleksander Mikhailovich, chargé d'affaires, Soviet embassy in London.

KULAZHENKOV, Anatolii Georgievich, counsellor, USSR embassy in Turkey, 1942–44.

KUMYKIN, Pavel Nikolaevich, first deputy minister of foreign trade, 1951–53.

KURILAS, Grigorii, member, Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Palestine.

KUZNETSOV, Vladimir, Soviet representative to the first conference of the World Federation of Trade Unions which took place in London in February 1945.

KVITKO, Lev Moiseevich (Leib), Yiddish poet; member, Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee; member, *Eynikeyt* editorial board; arrested 1949 and executed 1952.

LANGE, Oskar, Polish ambassador to US, 1945–46; representative to UN Security Council, 1946–47.

LAPID, Arye, second secretary, Israel embassy in Moscow, 1948–50; head, consular section, 1949–50; counsellor, East European Division, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1950–51.

LAVRENT'EV, Anatolii Iosifovich, head, Middle East Department, People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, 1943–44; deputy minister for foreign affairs, 1949–51.

LEBEDEV, Viktor Zakharovich, Soviet ambassador to Poland, 1945–51.

LEONID (Il'ia Khristoforovich Lobachev), Archimandrite, appointed by Moscow Patriarchate as head of Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission in Israel, 1948–49.

LEVAVI, Arye (b. 1912), senior official, Jewish Agency Political Department; August 1948–September 1950, secretary and counsellor, Israeli legation in USSR; from September 1950 until April 1952, director, East European Division, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs; subsequently first deputy director-general of ministry.

LEVIN, Yitzhak Meir, leader, Agudat Yisrael movement; minister of social welfare, 1948–52.

LEVITE, Liova, political secretary of Mapam, 1948–49.

LIE, Trygve, Norwegian politician and diplomat; first UN secretary-general, 1946–52.

LIFSHITZ, Zalman, cartographer and expert on land surveying; representative to Technical Commission on Refugee Problems, Palestine Conciliation Commission, 1949; chief adviser to Department of Lands, Ministry of Agriculture; adviser, Jewish Agency delegation to UN, 1947–48.

LINTON, Ivor Joseph, political secretary, London Central Office of World Zionist Organization, 1940–48; consul-general of Israel in UK, 1948–49.

LIPSKY, Louis, US Zionist leader, journalist and author; member of World Jewish Congress.

LITVINOV, Maksim Maksimovich (1876–1951), people's commissar for foreign affairs, 1930–39; ambassador to US, 1941–43; deputy people's commissar for foreign affairs, 1943–46.

LIVNEH (Liebenstein), Eliezer, co-founder and editor, *Hador* daily, 1949; member of Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee.

LIWSZYC, David (1898–1973), secretary, Mapam office, Tel Aviv.

LLOYD GEORGE, David, British prime minister, 1916–22.

LOCKER, Berl (1887–1972), political adviser, London Central Office of World Zionist Organization, 1937–47; member, Jewish Agency Executive, 1945–48; chairman, Jewish Agency Executive in Jerusalem from September 1948.

LOMAKIN, Ia.M., official, Department of International Relations, AUCP(b) Central Committee.

LOURIE, Arthur, director of Jewish Agency Office in New York, 1947–48; Israeli consul-general in New York and deputy permanent representative to UN, 1948–53.

LOVETT, Robert Abercrombie, special assistant to secretary of war, 1940–45; under-secretary of state, 1947–49.

LOWDERMILK, Walter Clay, consultant on soil conservation and land development, Food and Agricultural Organization (UN) in Israel, 1951–53.

LOZOVSKII, Solomon Abramovich (1878–1952), USSR deputy people's commissar for foreign affairs, 1939–46; deputy head (1941–46), later head (1946–47) of Sovinformburo; arrested in January 1949, executed, 12 August 1952.

LUKE, Stephen Elliot Vyvyan, British civil servant; posted to Palestine Administration, 1936–37; on Palestine Partition Commission, 1938; under-secretary Cabinet Office, 1947–50; assistant under-secretary of state, Colonial Office, 1950–53.

LUNDSTRÖM, Aage N., chief of staff, UN Truce Supervision and personal representative of mediator, August–September 1948.

LUTSKII, Vladimir Mikhailovich, Soviet orientalist.

McCLINTOCK, Robert Mills, political adviser, US delegation to UN General Assembly special sessions, 1947–48.

McCLOY, John, J., assistant secretary of war, 1941–45; president, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 1947–49; US High Commissioner for Germany, 1949–52.

McDONALD, James Grover, member, Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry on Palestine; US special representative to Israel, 1948–49; ambassador to Israel, 1949–51.

MacDONALD, James Ramsey, British prime minister in second Labour government, 1929–31; prime minister and lord of treasury in second National Government, 1931; prime minister, 1932–35.

MacDONALD, Malcolm John, British secretary of state for dominion affairs and secretary of state for colonies.

McGHEE George Crews, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and African Affairs, 1949–51; US ambassador to Turkey, 1951–53.

McMAHON, Arthur Henry, British high commissioner for Egypt, 1914–16.

MacMICHAEL, Harold Alfred, British high commissioner for Palestine, 1937–44.

McNEIL, Hector, British parliamentary under-secretary of state at Foreign Office, 1942–45; minister of state for foreign affairs, 1946.

MAGNES, Judah Leib (Leon), president, Hebrew University; president, Jewish Joint Distribution Committee in Palestine; president, Brit Shalom and Ihud.

MAHER, Ahmad, Egyptian prime minister and minister of interior, 1944–45; assassinated after initiating declaration of war on Germany and Japan.

MAISKII, Ivan Mikhailovich (1884–1975), USSR ambassador to Britain, 1932–43; deputy people's commissar of foreign affairs, 1943–46.

MAKSIMOV, Mikhail Alekseevich, USSR ambassador to Iran, 1944–45; deputy head, Middle East Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1945–50.

MALENKOV, Georgii Maksimilianovich, full Politburo member from 1946; secretary, AUPC(b)/CPSU Central Committee, 1939–53; deputy chairman, USSR Council of Ministers, 1946–53; chairman, Council of Ministers, 1953.

MALIK, Charles Habib, first Lebanese minister to US, 1945–53; ambassador to US, 1953–55; led Lebanese delegation to UN, 1946–54.

MALIK, Iakov Aleksandrovich (1906–80), deputy minister of foreign affairs, 1946–53; USSR representative at UN Security Council, 1948–52.

MALINOVSKII, Rodion Iakovlevich, marshal of the Soviet Union.

MANRIQUE, Delara Hernández Aurelio, Mexican diplomat; minister to Sweden and Denmark from 1946.

MANUIL'SKII, Dmitrii Zakharovich, minister of foreign affairs, Ukrainian SSR from 1944; representative of the Ukraine in the UN.

MARKISH, Perets D., Russian Jewish poet, novelist and dramatist; member, Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee presidium and editorial board *Eynikeyt*; edited *Heimland* literary almanac; arrested 1949 and executed 1952.

MARSHALL, George Catlett, chief-of-staff, US army, 1939–45; US representative to Council of Foreign Ministers, Moscow and London, UN General Assembly, 1947; secretary of state, 1947–49; secretary of defense, 1950–51.

MASARYK, Jan Garrigue, deputy prime minister of Czechoslovakia, 1941–45; minister of foreign affairs, 1940–48.

MEIR (*see* Meyerson)

MENDELSON, Morris J., president and chairman, United Zionists–Revisionists of America.

MEN'SHIKOV, Mikhail Alekseevich, USSR deputy minister of foreign trade, 1946–51.

MERKULOV, Vsevolod Nikolaevich, people's commissar of state security, 1943–46, and later minister of state control; arrested and executed, 1953.

MERON, Gershon (b. 1904), director, Economic Division, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1948–52; director general, Ministry of Trade and Industry, 1950.

MEYERSON (Meir), Golda (1898–1978), member, Jewish Agency Executive; acting director, Jewish Agency Political Department, July 1946–48; Israel's minister to USSR, September 1948–March 1949; subsequently minister of labour.

MIKHAILOV, Konstantin Aleksandrovich, USSR ambassador to Afghanistan, 1941–43; ambassador to Iran, 1943–44; head, Department of Latin American Countries, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1945–46; acting head, Department of USA, 1946; head, Department of South and East Asian Countries, 1948.

MIKHAILOV, Nikolai A., secretary, CPSU Central Committee from October 1952.

MIKHAILOV, Sergei Sergeevich, counsellor, USSR embassy in Turkey, 1945–46.

MIKHOELS, Solomon Mikhailovich, Soviet Yiddish actor, director, Moscow State Jewish Theatre from 1928; from August 1941, chairman of Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee; murdered on Stalin's orders, January 1948.

MIKOIAN, Anastas, Politburo member from 1935; from 1946, vice chairman, USSR Council of Ministers with responsibility for directing trade.

MIKUNIS, Shmuel, secretary-general, Israeli Communist Party; MK.

MINTS, Isaak Izrailevich, historian, member, USSR Academy of Sciences.

MOCH, Jules, French mininster of defence, 1950–51.

MOHN, Paul, UN mediator; assistant to Bernadotte.

MOLOTOV, Viacheslav Mikhailovich (1890–1986), Politburo member from 1925; chairman, USSR Council of People's Commissars, 1930–41; first deputy chairman, USSR Council of People's Commissars, 1941–46; deputy chairman, USSR Council of Ministers, 1946–53; people's commissar and minister for foreign affairs, 1939–49.

MORGAN, George Allen, first secretary and consul, US embassy in Moscow, 1948–50.

MORGENTHAU, Henry Jr., US secretary of treasury, 1934–45; general chairman, UJA, 1947–50.

MORRISON, Herbert Stanley, British home secretary; foreign secretary, 1951.

MOYNE, Lord (Walter Edward Guinness), appointed British minister resident in Middle East, 1944; assassinated same year.

MUKHIN, Mikhail L., counsellor, USSR mission in Israel.

NAMIER (Bernstein-Namierowski), Lewis, English historian and Zionist; political secretary of Zionist Executive, 1927–31; professor of modern history, Manchester University, 1931–53.

NAMIR (Nemirovsky), Mordecai (1897–1975), counsellor, Israeli legation in USSR, August 1948–July 1949; minister to USSR, July 1949–November 1950.

NEMCHINOV, S., attaché, Near East Department, Soviet Foreign Ministry.

NEUMANN, Emanuel (1893–1980), head, Department of Public Relations and Political Action, Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs in US, 1940–42; head, delegation of World Zionist Congress, American Section, 1946; member, Jewish Agency for Palestine delegation to UN, 1947; president, Zionist Organization of America, 1947–48.

NIR (Rafalkes), Nahum, MK, Mapam.

NISSAN (Katznelson), Avraham , executive member, Vaad Leumi, 1931–48; Israeli delegate to UN, 1949–50; minister to Scandinavia, 1950–56.

NOVIKOV, Kirill Vasil'evich, counsellor, USSR embassy in London, 1940–42; 1942–47, head, Second European Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

NOVIKOV, Nikolai Vasil'evich (1903–89), Soviet minister to Egypt, 1943–44; ambassador to US, 1944–47.

OREN, Mordechai, editor, *Al Hamishmar*; member, Central Committee and Political Bureau of Mapam; imprisoned in Prague, 1951–56.

ORENSTEIN, Shimon, deputy trade attaché, Israel embassy in Czechoslovakia until 1949; arrested 1951, sentenced (1953) to life imprisonment; released 1954.

PAISOV, N.F., assistant director, Fourth European Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

PAL'GUNOV, Nikolai Grigor'evich, director of TASS, 1944–66.

PANIUSHKIN, Aleksandr Semenovich, Soviet ambassador to US, 1947–52.

PASTOEV, V.V., secretary to Andrei Vyshinskii.

PAUKER, Ana, Romanian minister of foreign affairs, 1947–52.

PEGOV, Nikolai Mikhailovich, secretary, Presidium, USSR Supreme Soviet, 1953–6.

PERLSON (Peri), Eliezer, Mapai activist; member, Histadrut council; director, Kupat Holim; deputy mayor, Tel Aviv.

PERLZWEIG, Maurice L., Reform rabbi and official of World Jewish Congress.

PETRENKO, Nikolai Andreevich, press attaché, USSR embassy in Turkey.

PINES, Dan, Histadrut delegate to US, 1945–49; *Davar* correspondent, US.

PLUMER, Herbert, second high commissioner of Palestine, 1925–28.

PODTSEROB, Boris Fedorovich, secretary-general, USSR Minstry of Foreign Affairs, 1949–52; deputy minister of foreign affairs, 1952–53.

PODVIGIN, Evgenii M., Soviet consul in Beirut; official, Near and Middle East Department.

POLIANSKII, Ivan Vasil'evich, chairman, Council for Affairs of Religious Cults attached to USSR Council of Ministers, 1944–56.

POPOV, Mikhail P., second secretary, USSR legation in Israel; VOKS representative in Israel.

POSPELOV, Petr Nikolaevich, chief editor, *Pravda*, 1940–49; 1949–52, director, AUCP(b) Central Committee Institute of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

POTEMKIN, Vladimir Petrovich, deputy head, People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, 1937–40.

POZHIDAEV, Dmitrii Petrovich, counsellor, USSR embassy in Belgium, 1948–53.

PRIHAR (*see* Friedberg)

PROTICH, Dragoslav, Department of Security Council Affairs, UN Secretariat.

PSURTSEV, Nikolai Dem'ianovich, Soviet minister of communications, 1948–75.

PUSHKIN Georgii Maksimovich, minister, then ambassador to Hungary, 1945–49; head, USSR diplomatic mission in GDR, 1949–52; deputy minister for foreign affairs, 1952–53.

QAWUQJI, Fawzi, commander, Arab Army of Liberation in Palestine during 1948 war.

al-QUWWATLI, Shukri, led National Bloc to victory in 1943 and served as Syrian president, 1943–49; overthrown by a military coup in 1949 and spent five years in exile in Egypt.

RABINOVICH, Shloyme, deputy editor, *Eynikeyt*, 1945–48; arrested 1949; released 1953.

RABINOVICH, Yitzhak, member, Committee for Liaison with USSR, Jewish Agency for Palestine, 1942–47; board member, Magen Society.

RAFAEL (Ruffer), Gideon (1913–99), counsellor, Israel permanent delegation to UN, 1948–53.

RAKOSI, Matyas, secretary-general, Hungarian Communist Party from 1944; prime minister of Hungary, 1952–53.

RATNER, Yohanan (1891–1972), colonel, military attaché at Israeli legation in USSR, September 1948–May 1949.

RAZIN, Ben-Zion, head, Israel–USSR Friendship Society (Mapai); first secretary, Israeli legation in Sofia, August 1952–October 1953.

REMEZ (Drabkin), David, general secretary, Histadrut, 1935–45; chairman, Vaad Leumi executive, 1944–48; minister of commerce, 1948–49.

RHEE, Syngman, president of Republic of Korea, 1948–60.

RIFTIN, Yaacov, (1907–78), political secretary of Mapam, 1948–54; member of Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, 1949–55.

RILEY, William Edward, USMC; chief of staff, UN Truce Supervision Organization, 1948–53.

ROBERTS, Frank Needham, chief of staff, US military mission in Moscow, 1944; attaché, US embassy in Moscow and Ankara, 1946.

ROBERTSON, Brian Hubert, commander-in-chief, British Middle East land forces, 1950–53.

ROBESON, Paul, American singer and actor; recipient, Stalin Peace Prize, 1952.

ROBINSON, Jacob (1889–1977), director, Institute for Jewish Affairs of World Jewish Congress and American Jewish Congress, 1941–47; legal adviser to Jewish Agency delegation to UN, 1947–48; counsellor, permanent mission of Israel to UN from 1948.

ROKAH, Yisrael, Knesset deputy speaker; Tel Aviv mayor, 1936–53; minister of interior, 1953–55.

ROKOSSOVSKII, Konstantin Konstantinovich, marshal of Soviet Union; commander, Soviet occupation forces in Poland and Königsberg area, 1945–49; deputy chairman, Polish Council of Ministers and Polish minister of defence, 1949–56.

ROMER, Tadeusz, Polish ambassador to USSR, 1942–43.

ROOSEVELT, Franklin Delano, US president, 1933–45.

ROSENBLEUTH (Rosen), Pinhas (Felix), Israeli minister of justice, 1948–61; co-founder of Progressive Party, 1948.

ROSENNE (Rowson), Shabbtai, Jewish Agency Political Department from 1948; legal adviser, Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from 1948.

ROZHKOV, Vladimir I., second and later first secretary, USSR legation in Israel.

RUBIN, Reuven, Israeli minister to Romania, 1948–49.

RUFFER (*see* Rafael)

RUSK, Dean, director, Office of UN Affairs, US Department of State.

SADEH (Landsberg), Yitzhak, founder of Palmah and its first commander, 1941–45; commander of first armoured brigade of the Israeli Army (known as the 8th brigade) during the Arab–Israeli War of 1948.

al-SAID, Nuri, served as Iraqi prime minister eight times between 1930 and 1958; also served intermittently as foreign and defence minister.

SAKSIN, Georgii Filippovich, counsellor, USSR embassy to the Allied Government in London, 1943–44.

SALAME, Hasan ibn Ali, commander of Arab forces in central Palestine in 1948 war; killed June 1948.

SAMUEL, Herbert Louis, high commissioner for Palestine, 1919–25.

SAMYLOVSKII, Ivan Vasil'evich (1905–71), head, Middle East Department, People's Commissariat/Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1944–47.

SANDSTRÖM, Alfred Emil Fredrik, Swedish jurist; chairman, UNSCOP, 1947.

SASSON, Eliahu (Elias) (1902–78), director, Arab section of Jewish Agency Political Department, 1933–48; director, Middle East Division at Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, May 1948–December 1949.

SATTATH (*see* Tesler)

al-SAUD, Abdul Aziz, king of Saudi Arabia, 1932–53.

SCHUMAN, Robert, French premier, 1947–48; minister of foreign affairs, 1948–53.

SCHWARZBART, Isaac, Zionist leader in Poland; founder, General Zionists; member, Zionist General Council, 1933; elected Polish Diet, 1938. During WWII aided Jewish refugees to reach Palestine; member, Polish government-in-exile, 1940–45.

SEMIOSHKIN, Aleksandr Semenovich, attaché, Middle East Department, Soviet Foreign Ministry, 1948; attaché, USSR legation in Israel.

SENKEVICH (*see* Antonii)

SERAEV, Il'ia, general; head, Foreign Relations Department, USSR Ministry of Defence.

SERGEEV, NIKOLAI P., second secretary, USSR legation in Israel.

SERGEEV, V.A., deputy head, Chief Administration for Soviet Property Abroad, attached to USSR Council of Ministers.

SERGEICHUK, K., official of Soviet Ministry of Communications.

SERLIN, Yosef, MK, General Zionists.

SHAPIRA, Moshe, minister of immigration and health, 1948–49; minister of interior, 1949–53.

SHAPIRA, Yaacov Shimshon, Israeli attorney-general, 1948–50.

SHARETT (Shertok), Moshe (1894–1965), member, Jewish Agency Executive and director of its Political Department, 1933–48; member, Vaad Leumi, April–May 1948; minister of foreign affairs of Israel from May 1948; prime minister, 1954–55.

SHAZAR (Rubashov), Shneor Zalman, chairman, Jewish Agency Executive in Jerusalem; editor, *Davar*, 1925–48; member, Israel delegation to Lake Success; minister of education, 1949–50, president of Israel, 1968–73.

SHCHERBAKOV, Aleksandr Sergeevich, secretary, CC CPSU, 1941–45.

SHCHERBAKOV, L.A., official, USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium.

SHCHIBORIN, Aleksei Dmitrievich (1912–88), Soviet minister to Egypt, 1944–48; deputy head of Middle East Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1948–53.

SHEININ, Lev, senior investigator, Soviet Chief Prosecutor's Office; arrested, 1951; released, 1953.

SHERF, Zeev, Israeli government secretary, 1948–57.

SHILOAH, Reuven, director, Israeli foreign intelligence service (Mossad), 1948–53; delegate to UN conference, San Francisco, 1946.

SHIMELIOVICH, Boris A., physician, director, Botkin Hospital, Moscow; member, Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee; arrested, 1949; executed, 1952.

SHITREET, Bechor Shalom, Israeli minister of police, 1948–66.

SHLIFER, Solomon Moiseevich, rabbi of Moscow Choral Synagogue, 1944–51.

SHOHAT, Manya, Labour activist; member, V League; member, Mapam from 1948.

SHRAGAI, Shlomo Zalman, member, Jewish Agency Executive; head of Press Information Office, Vaad Leumi.

SHTEIN, Boris Efimovich (1892–1961), ambassador to Italy, 1935–39; from 1939 professor, Higher School of Diplomacy of USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs; counsellor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1945–52; adviser and member of Soviet delegation to the First (1946) and Second (1947) Sessions of the UN General Assembly.

al-SHUQAYRI, Ahmad, Palestinian politician; director of Palestine Office in NY and Jerusalem, 1945; member, Arab Higher Committee, 1946.

SHVEDOV, Aleksei Aleksandrovich, first secretary, USSR Mission in Egypt, 1945–50.

SHVERNIK, Nikolai Mikhailovich, chairman, Presidium of USSR Supreme Soviet, 1946–53.

SIDQI, Ismail, Egyptian prime minister, 1931–33 and 1946.

SILIN, Mikhail Aleksandrovich, Soviet ambassador to Czechoslovakia, 1948–51.

SILVER, Abba Hillel, president, Zionist Organization of America, 1945–47; member of Jewish Agency Executive and chairman of its American section, 1946–48; chairman, American Zionist Emergency Council, 1945–49; president, Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1945–47; Jewish Agency Executive representative at UN, 1947–48.

SIMON, Michael, chief of protocol, Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1948–57.

SIMONOV, Konstantin Mikhailovich, writer and correspondent for *Krasnaia zvezda*, 1941–45; editor, *Novyi mir*, 1946–50, and *Literaturnaia gazeta*, 1950–53.

SINCLAIR, Archibald Henry MacDonald, British secretary of state for air, 1940; chairman of Liberal Party.

SKRZESZEWSKI, Stanislaw, Polish minister of foreign affairs, 1951–56.

SLADKOVSKII, M., head, Eastern Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Trade.

SLANSKY, Rudolf, Czechoslovak Party secretary-general, charged with being a Zionist agent and engaging in espionage for West; tried with 13 others in November 1952; 11, including Slánsky, were sentenced to death.

SMART, Walter Alexander, counsellor, later minister, UK embassy in Cairo, 1926–45.

SMIRNOV, Andrei Andreevich, head, Third European Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1943–48.

SMITH, Walter Bedell, US ambassador to USSR, 1946–49; director, Central Intelligence Agency, 1950–53; under-secretary of state, 1953–54.

SMUTS, Jan Christian, South African prime minister, from 1939–48; chairman, South African delegation to the UN General Assembly, 1946.

SNEH (Kleinbaum), Moshe (1909–72), member, Jewish Agency Executive, 1945–47; member, Mapam Executive Committee, 1947–53; MK from 1949 to 1965 and 1969–72.

SOBOLEV, Arkadii Aleksandrovich, minister–counsellor, USSR embassy in London, 1942–45; assistant UN secretary–general, 1946–49.

SOFRONOV, Anatolii Vladimirovich, Russian poet and playwright.

SOLOD, Daniil Semenovich (b. 1908), counsellor, USSR mission in Egypt, 1943–44; chief, USSR mission in Syria and Lebanon, 1944–50; deputy head, then head, Department of Near and Middle East Countries, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1951–53.

SOMMERSTEIN, Emil, chairman, Central Jewish Committee, Poland, 1944–46; co-founder and chairman, economic section (1946) and member of presidium of European section, World Jewish Congress.

SPAAK, Paul-Henri, head of Belgian delegation to Third Session, UN General Assembly.

SPRINZAK, Yosef, secretary-general, Histadrut, 1945–49; Knesset speaker, 1949–59.

STALIN, Iosif Vissarionovich, general-secretary, CC RCP(b)/AUCP(b)/CPSU, 1922–53, and chairman of USSR Council of Ministers, 1941–53.

STEVENSON, Adlai Ewing, US politician; Democratic candidate for president, 1952.

STRABOLGI, Lord (Joseph Montague Kenworthy), member, House of Lords, 1934–53, chief Labour whip, 1938–42.

al-SULH, Riyad, Lebanese prime minister, 1943–45, 1946–51; negotiated national pact with Bishara al-Khuri in 1943.

SULTANOV, Abdurakhman Fasliakhovich, from 1943, second secretary, USSR legation in Egypt; subsequently chargé d'affaires of USSR legation in Iraq.

SURITS, Iakov Zakharovich, counsellor, USSR People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, 1940–45.

SURKOV, Aleksei Aleksandrovich, chief editor, *Literaturnaia gazeta*, 1944–46 and *Ogonek*, 1949–54.

SUSLOV, Mikhail Andreevich, secretary, AUCP(b)/CPSU Party Central Committee from 1947–82.

SVET, Gershon, journalist; member, *Haaretz* editorial board.

TARASOV, Mikhail Petrovich, secretary, All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, 1944.

TARLE, Evgenii Viktorovich, Soviet historian and member of Academy of Sciences.

TARNOPOLER, Luwish (Leib), secretary-general of the League of Friendship with the Soviet Union, 1942–49.

TARTAKOWER, Arye, director, Department of Relief and Rehabilitation, World Jewish Congress, 1939–46.

TEPLOV, Leonid Fedorovich, deputy head, Fourth European Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1946–48.

TESLER (Sattath), Dov, head, Soviet and Polish Affairs Section, East European Division, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from 1948; head, East German Affairs section, from 1950.

TIMOFEEV, Anatolii Leont'evich, first secretary, Department of UN Affairs, Soviet Foreign Ministry.

TIMOTHEOS (Pythagoras Themelis), Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem from 1935.

TITO (Broz), Josip, commander-in-chief, Communist Party of Yugoslavia armed detachments from 1941; head of provisional government, 1943; prime minister and

minister of national defence from 1945; president, Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, 1953–76.

TOLEDANO, Vincente Lombardo, Mexican labour leader; vice-president, World Federation of Trade Unions from 1945.

TOPCHIEV, Aleksandr Vasil'evich, chief academic secretary, USSR Academy of Sciences.

TOUMA, Emil, Palestinian Arab journalist; leading member of Palestine Communist Party; co-founder, League for National Liberation, 1943; founder, Communist bi-weekly *al-Ittihad*, 1944.

TRUMAN, Harry S., US president, 1945–53.

TSARAPKIN, Semen Konstantinovich (1906–84), deputy head, and then head, Second Eastern Department, USSR People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, 1939–44; head, USA Department, USSR People's Commissariat/Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1944–47; counsellor-minister, USSR embassy in US, 1947–49; deputy permanent representative to the UN Security Council, 1948–52.

TSIRULNIKOV, Shlomo, Israeli industrialist; active in League for Friendship with USSR.

UMANSKII, Konstantin Aleksandrovich, USSR ambassador to US, 1939–41 and to Mexico, 1941–44.

USSISHKIN, Menahem, Zionist leader; head, Jewish National Fund, 1923–42.

VARGA, Eugen, economist, member of USSR Academy of Sciences, 1927–47.

VASILENKO, V.S., acting head, Press Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1948.

VAVILOV, Mikhail Sergeevich, first secretary, USSR embassy in Washington, 1946–47.

VELEBIT, Vladimir L., Yugoslav under-secretary of foreign affairs.

VINOGRADOV, Sergei Aleksandrovich (1907–70), Soviet ambassador to Turkey, 1940–48; head of Department for UN Affairs, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1949–50.

VLASOV, Andrei Petrovich, head, Consular Deptartment, USSR Foreign Ministry, 1948–67.

VOLGIN, Viacheslav Petrovich, historian, member, USSR Academy of Sciences.

VOROSHILOV, Kliment Efremevich, deputy chairman, USSR Council of Ministers.

VOVSI, Miron Semenovich, physician and professor of medicine; member, Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee; arrested in 1952 and implicated in Doctors' Plot; released and rehabilitated after Stalin's death.

VOZNESENSKII, Nikolai Alekseevich, chairman, USSR Gosplan, 1938–41 and 1946–49; Politburo member, 1947–49; arrested in so-called Leningrad Affair, tried and executed.

VYSHINSKII, Andrei Ianuar'evich (1883–1954), first deputy, people's commissar for foreign affairs, 1940–46; deputy minister of foreign affairs, 1946–49; minister of

foreign affairs, 1949–53; appointed permanent Soviet delegate to the United Nations in 1953.

WAHL, David R., Washington secretary, American Jewish Conference, 1945–47.

WALLACE, Henry Agard, US vice-president, 1940–45; secretary of commerce, 1945–46.

WALTER (*see* Avidan)

WEIZMANN, Chaim (1874–1952), president of World Zionist Organization, 1935–46; president of Provisional Council of State of Israel, 1948–49; president, State of Israel, 1949–52.

WEST, Benjamin, active in Magen Society for Jews of Russia; editor, *Magen* journal.

WILNER (Kowner), Meir (Ber), secretary, Israel Communist Party; MK.

WILSON, Charles Edward, US secretary of defense from January 1953.

WILSON, Henry Maitland, general officer commanding British forces in Palestine and Transjordan, 1941; head, Joint Staff Mission in Washington, 1945–47.

WILSON, Woodrow, US president, 1913–21.

WISE, Stephen Samuel, rabbi; founder and first secretary of Federation of American Zionists; chairman, Provisional Executive Committee for General Zionist Affairs.

YADIN, Yigael, Hagana operations officer; IDF chief of staff, 1949–52.

YUVAL, Moshe, member, Jewish Agency delegation to UN and secretary of Jewish Agency Office in Washington, 1947–48.

ZAITSEV, Grigorii Titovich, deputy head, Middle East Department, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1944–45; envoy to Iraq, 1945–49; deputy head, Middle East Department, 1949.

ZARUBIN, Georgii Nikolaevich, Soviet ambassador to UK, 1946–52.

ZASLAVSKII, David, Soviet journalist.

ZAWADOWSKI, Zygmunt, Polish diplomat; minister to Syria and Lebanon.

ZERUBAVEL, Yaacov, leader, Poale Zion–Left; member of Mapam from 1948.

ZHDANOV, Andrei Aleksandrovich, member of Politburo from 1939; played key role in foundation of Cominform, 1947.

ZHUKOV, Dmitrii Aleksandrovich, head, Protocol Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1953–54.

ZIESLING, Aharon, founder and leader of Mapam; active in V League; Israeli minister of agriculture, 1948–49.

ZORIN, Valerian Aleksandrovich (1902–86), Soviet diplomat; head of Fourth European Department, People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, 1943–45; ambassador to Czechoslovakia, 1945–47; deputy minister of foreign affairs, 1947–55.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Archives

Arkhiv Prezidenta Rossisskoi Federatsii (AP RF) – Presidential Archive of the Russian Federation, Moscow

Arkhiv vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (AVP RF) – Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation, Russian Foreign Ministry, Moscow

- f.05 Office of USSR People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, M.M. Litvinov
- f.06 Office of USSR People's Commissar and Minister of Foreign Affairs, V.M. Molotov
- f.07 Office of USSR Deputy People's Commissar and Minister of Foreign Affairs, A.I. Vyshinskii
- f.012 Office of USSR Deputy People's Commissar and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, V.G. Dekanozov
- f.017 Office of USSR Deputy People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, I.M. Maiskii
- f.018 Office of USSR Deputy Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ia.A. Malik
- f.021 Office of USSR Deputy Ministry of Foreign Affairs V.A. Zorin
- f.022 Office of USSR Deputy Ministry of Foreign Affairs, A.A. Gromyko
- f.059 Coded Telegrams
- f.089 Israel Desk
- f.0118 Palestine Desk

Ben-Gurion Archives (Sde Boker)

Central Zionist Archives (CZA) (Jerusalem)

- A 245 Papers of Moshe Sharett
- J 89 Magen Society
- S 25 Political Department of the Jewish Agency for Palestine
- S 53 Office of Eliezer Kaplan
- S 100 Minutes of Zionist Executive and Jewish Agency in Palestine
- Z 4 World Zionist Organization and Jewish Agency for Palestine in London
- Z 5 Office of Jewish Agency Board in the US
- Z 6 Office of Nahum Goldmann, Germany/New York

Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossisskoi Federatsii (GARF) – State Archives of the Russian Federation, Moscow

- f.5283 VOKS
- f.991 Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults attached to the USSR Council of Ministers
- f.8114 Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee

Hagana Archive (Tel Aviv)

- Temp. 15. 131, Palestine Police, Criminal Investigations Department

Israel State Archives (ISA) (Jerusalem)

Provisional Government Minutes
RG 93. Israeli Missions Abroad
93.1 Coded Telegrams
93.2 Israel Legation in Paris
93.3 Jewish Agency/Israeli Delegation to the UN
93.8 Israeli Embassy in Washington

RG 130. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel
130.2 Office of the Minister and Director-General
130.09 Coded Telegrams
130.10 West European Division
130.11 East European Division
130.13 British Commonwealth Division
130.15 Middle East Division
130.20 United States Division

Public Record Office (PRO) (London, UK)
FO 371 Foreign Office (London), General Correspondence
CO 733 Colonial Office (London), Palestine and Transjordan

Weizmann Archives (WA) (Rehovot, Israel)

Published Sources

—. *The Anglo–American Committee on Palestine 1945–1946.* New York, 1987.

—. *The British Decision to Evacuate Palestine 1947–1948.* New York, 1987.

Central Zionist Archive, Israel State Archives, Tel Aviv University. *Political Documents of the Jewish Agency.* Vol. I–II, May 1945–1947. Jerusalem, 1996, 1998.

Cohen, Michael J., ed. *Palestine and Arab Federation 1938–1945.* New York, 1987.

Correspondence with the Palestine Arab Delegation and the Zionist Organization. Cmd. 1700, 1922.

Divrei haknesset (Knesset proceedings). Vols. III, VIII, IX, XIII , 1949–53. Jerusalem.

Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel. Vols. 1–8, 1948–1953. Jerusalem, 1981–95.

Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel. Companion Vols. 4–8 [English Summaries of Hebrew Documents and Notes]. Jerusalem, 1986–95.

Dokumenty vneshnei politiki SSSR (Documents on Soviet foreign policy). Vol. 9. Moscow, 1964.

Foreign Relations of the United States [FRUS]. 1944–51. Vols. V–VII. Washington, 1965–82.

Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers.

Instytut Historyczny imienia Generala Sikorskiego. *Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations 1939–1945.* Vols. 1, 2. London, 1961, 1967.

Israel State Archives, Central Zionist Archives. *Political and Diplomatic Documents,* December 1947–May 1948. Jerusalem, 1979.

—. *Political and Diplomatic Documents.* Companion Volume. Jerusalem, 1979.

Khalil, Muhammad. *The Arab States and the Arab League. A Documentary Record.* Vol. 2. Beirut, 1962.

The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann. Series A, Vol. XX. New Brunswick, N.J, 1979.

The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann. Series B, Vol. II. New Brunswick, NJ, 1984.

Naumov, V.P., ed. *Nepravednyi sud. Poslednii stalinskii rasstrel* (Unjust trial: The last Stalinist execution). Moscow, 1994.

Redlich, Shimon. *War, Holocaust and Stalinism. A Documentary Study of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in the USSR.* Luxembourg, 1995.

State of Israel, Provisional Council of State. *Protokol hadiyunim* (Record of debates). Vol. I, 15th Session, 16 August 1948.

United Nations. *Official Records of the Second Part of the First Session of the General Assembly (GA OR), Fourth Committee Trusteeship.* Part 1, *Summary Record of Meetings 1 November–12 December 1946.* New York, 1946.

United Nations. *Resolutions Adopted by the General Assembly during the First Part of Its First Session.* London, 1946.

United Nations. *Official Records of the Second Session of the General Assembly. Supplement No. 11, United Nations Special Committee on Palestine. Report to the General Assembly.* Vols. I–IV. New York, 1947.

United Nations. *Official Records of the Second Session of the General Assembly. Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine Question. Summary Records of Meetings 25 September–25 November 1947.* New York, 1947.

United Nations. *Official Records of the Fourth Session of the General Assembly. Ad Hoc Political Committee.* Annex, Vols. 1, 2. New York, 1949.

United Nations. *Official Records of the Seventh Session of the General Assembly , First Committee, Summary Records of Meetings,* October 1952–August 1953. New York, 1953.

United Nations. *Security Council Official Records (SC OR).* Second Year (1947), Third Year (1948), Sixth Year (1951).

SECONDARY SOURCES

Books

Bauer, Yehuda. *Flight and Rescue: Brichah.* New York, 1970.

Ben-Gurion, David. *Bihilakem Yisrael* (The struggle for Israel). Tel Aviv, 1951.

Caplan, Neil. *Futile Diplomacy.* Vol. 3: *The United Nations, the Great Powers and Middle East Peacemaking, 1948–1954.* London, 1997.

Cohen, Yohanan. *Ovrim kol gvul* (Beyond all boundaries). Tel Aviv 1995.

Cuperman, Jaffa. *Bitsvat hakomunizm. Hahistadrut hatsionit beromania, 1944–1949* (In the grip of communism: The Zionist Federation in Romania, 1944–1949). Tel Aviv, 1995.

Donat, Alexander. *Neopalimaia kupina* (The burning bush). New York, 1973.

Duberman, Martin. *Paul Robeson: A Biography.* New York, 1990.

Erenburg, Il'ia. *Sovest' narodov* (The people's conscience). Moscow, 1956.

Gelber, Yoav. *Shorshei Hahavatselet. Hamodiin beyishuv 1918–1947* (*Growing a Fleur-de Lis: The Intelligence Services of the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine 1918–1947*). Tel Aviv, 1992.

Gorali, Abraham. *Law of Landlord and Tenant in Palestine.* Jerusalem, 1947.

Gorky, Maksim. *Publitsisticheskie stat'i* (Articles on contemporary themes). Moscow, 1931.

Hopwood, Derek. *The Russian Presence in Syria and Palestine, 1843–1914.* Oxford, 1969.

Katz, Samuel. *Days of Fire.* London, 1968.

Kenez, Peter. *Cinema and Soviet Society.* Cambridge, 1992.

King, Robert R. *Minorities under Communism: Nationalities as a Source of Tension among Balkan Communist States.* Cambridge, MA, 1973.

Kot, Stanislaw. *Conversations with the Kremlin and Dispatches from Russia.* Transl. by H.C. Stevens. London, 1963.

Levin, Dov. *The Lesser of Two Evils: Eastern European Jewry under Soviet Rule, 1939–1941.* Philadelphia, 1995.

Liga lekishrei yedidut Brit Hamoatsot. *Brit hamoatsot utekumat Yisrael: Divrei shlihehem shel amei SSR beirgun Haumot Hameuhadot Umoetset Habitahon* (The Soviet Union and the rebirth of Israel: Speeches of the representatives of the peoples of the USSR in the UN and the Security Council). Tel Aviv, 1950.

McDonald, James G. *My Mission to Israel, 1948–1951.* London, 1951.

Namir, Mordecai. *Shlihut beMoskva* (Mission to Moscow). Tel Aviv 1971.

Ro'i, Yaacov. *From Encroachment to Involvement.* New York, 1974.

—. *Soviet Decision Making in Practice: The USSR and Israel 1947–1954.* New Brunswick NJ/London, 1980.

—. *The Struggle for Soviet Jewish Emigration, 1948–1967.* Cambridge, 1991.

Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E. *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (Complete collected works). St. Petersburg, 1900.

Sharett, Moshe. *Yoman medini* (Political diary). Vol. 5. Tel Aviv, 1979.

Timm, Angelika. *Hammer, Zirkel Davidstern*. Bonn, 1997.

Tolstoi, Lev. *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (Complete collected works). Vol. 37. Moscow, 1992.

Tsahor, Zeev. *Hazan – Tnuat Hayim (Hazan – Life Movement)*. Jerusalem, 1997.

Vorontsov, Iurii and Igor Rachuk. *The Phenomenon of the Soviet Cinema*. Moscow, 1980.

Weizmann, Chaim. *Trial and Error. The Autobiography of Chaim Weizmann*. London, 1949.

Articles

Averbukh, Isai. 'Jewish Samizdat at the End of the Forties: Fragments from Margarita Aliger's Poem "Your Victory"'. In Yaacov Ro'i and Avi Beker, eds., *Jewish Culture and Identity in the Soviet Union*. New York, 1991, pp. 73–87.

Avizohar, Meir. 'Mehalahav hapro-sovietiim shel Moshe Sneh bi-1949: hadereh eleihem, hareka uhameniim haidiologiim' (Dr. Moshe Sneh's pro-Soviet actions in 1949: Background and ideological motives). *Iyunim Bitkumat Israel* 3 (1993), pp. 399–426.

Ginat, Rami, 'Soviet policy toward the Arab World, 1945–48'. *Middle Eastern Studies* 4 (1996), pp. 321–35.

Goldman, Jacob. 'Rabbi Herzog's First Rescue Journey'. *Niv hamidrashiya* (1964), pp. 7–8.

Hirszowicz, Lukasz. 'The Soviet Union and the Jews during World War II: British Foreign Office Documents'. *Soviet Jewish Affairs* 2 (1973), pp. 73–90.

Kark, Ruth. 'Changing Patterns of Land Ownership in Nineteenth Century Palestine: The European Influence'. *Journal of Historical Geography* 4 (1984), pp. 357–84.

Konasov,V.B. and Tereshchuk, A.V. 'Budut nemedlenno predany sudy voennogo tribunala' (For immediate trial by the military court). *Russkoe proshloe* 5 (1994), pp. 317–37.

Litvak, Yosef. 'Polish-Jewish Refugees Repatriated from the Soviet Union to Poland at the End of the Second World War and Afterwards'. In Norman Davies and Antony Polonsky, eds. *Jews in Eastern Poland and the USSR, 1939–46*. New York, 1991, pp. 227–39.

Minaev, V. 'Sionistskie agenty amerikanslkoi razvedki'. *Novoe vremia* 21 Jan. 1953.

'Narodno-osvoboditel'naia bor'ba v kolonial'nykh I polukolonial'nykh stranakh posle vtoroi mirovoi voiny' (People's liberation struggle in colonial and semi-colonial countries after World War II), *Voprosy ekonomiki* 10 (1949), pp. 74–93.

Pinkus, Benjamin. 'The Soviet Rejection of Zalman Shazar as Israel's Minister to the USSR in Light of New Documentary Material', *Shvut* (New Series) 4 (1996), pp. 183–212.

Ro'i, Yaacov. 'Soviet Policy in the Middle East: The Case of Palestine during World War II'. *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique* 3–4 (1974), pp. 373–408.

Tuwim, Julian. 'My – pol'skie evrei' (We Polish Jews). In A. Flegon and Y. Naumov, eds., *Russkii antisemitizm i evrei* (Russian antisemitism and the Jews). London, 1968, pp. 9–10.

Zemskov, V.N. 'Massovoe osvobozhdenie spetsposelentsev i ssyl'nykh (1954–1960gg) (The mass liberation of special settlers and exiles). *Sotsiologicheskie Issledovaniia,* 1 (1991), pp. 5–26.

INDEX

numbers in bold – documents by; numbers in italics – documents to

Abdallah, King of Jordan, 257, 259, 274, 353, 364, 399, 407, 409, 422, 469n, 593, 626
Abramov, Aleksandr Nikitich, **807–10, 811, 812–15, 817–19,** 819, **820–21, 821–4, 839–40,** 925n, 926, **929–30,** 930n, **934–5, 938**
Acheson, Dean, 140n, 161, 615n, 760, 761, 868n
Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine (*see* UN)
Adenauer, Konrad, 762n, 801, 802, 868
Agaronov, Reuben, 130
Agence France Presse, 467
Agudat Yisrael, 453, 545
Aharonov, Shneur, 30
Aharonovich, Zalman (*see* Aranne)
Ahdut Haavoda, 200, 201, 716, 737, 743
Ahimeir, Abba, 845n
Al hamishmar, 199, 379, 502, 509, 522, 562, 566, 572, 602, 609, 610
al-Alami, Musa, 85–6, 86n
Aleksii, Patriarch (Sergei Vladimirovich Simanskii), 307, 337n
Alexandros, Patriarch, 307n
Algeria, 73
Aliger, Margarita, 547, 550, 599nn
aliya (*see* immigration to Palestine)
Allied Military Control Commission, 98
Allied Supreme Council, 182
All-Slav Committee, 94, 282n
Al-Roy, Michael, 33
Alter, Wiktor, 55, 60
Ambijan, 60
American Committee of Jewish Writers, Artists and Scientists, 53n, 262n
American Council for Judaism, 220n
American Federation of Labor (AFL), 220
American Jewish Committee, 156n, 220
American Jewish Conference, 188n
American Jewish Congress, 29, 153
American Jewry, 6, 692; assistance to Palestine/Israel, 253, 314, 316, 416, 418, 632, 776; as factor in US policy on Palestine, 171, 176; and USSR, 152–3, 156; and Zionism, 96, 127, 218, 220, 223
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (Joint), 60, 850, 851, 876, 890, 928n
American Jewish Labor Council, 220
American Zionist Emergency Council, 150–7
Amery, Leopold, 185
Anastasii (Gribanovskii), Metropolitan 337, 420n
Anders, Wladyslaw, 94, 259, 273, 290, 294
Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry, 122, 126–7, 131, 132n, 135, 141n, 142n, 144, 185, 191, 194, 207, 220
Anglo-American Committee of Experts, 144–6
Anglo-American Convention (3 December 1924), 183
Anglo-Egyptian Treaty (*see also* Egypt), 141n, 370n
Anglo-Jewish Association, 215
Anglo-Jordanian Treaty (1946), 170, 431
Ankunidov, Vladimir Mikhailovich, **524–5**
anti-cosmopolitan campaign, 496, 546nn, 590–1, 652–3
Antipov, Vasilii, 115, 669n
antisemitism (*see also* Doctors' Plot), 203, 779; in tsarist Russia, 315, 358–9; in USSR, 107, 154, 358n, 456, 547n, 554n, 590n, 591, 648, 662n, 862n, 779
anti-Zionism (*see* Zionism)
Antonii, Archimandrite (Senkevich), 94, 115, 337
Antonii of Kiev, Metropolitan, 93n
Antonov, Aleksei Innokent'evich, 376, 459, 463
Appelt, Rudolf, 795n
Aqaba, 367, 369, 380, 425, 431, 458, 462
Arab Anti-Fascist League, 79

Arab boycott, 119, 122, 123
Arab Executive Committee, 210, 215
Arab Federation, 101
Arab government in Palestine (Gaza), 370, 372, 392, 621
Arab Higher Committee (in Palestine), 20n, 201, 212, 273, 274
Arab–Israeli War of 1948 (*see also* Arab States, arms supplies, Galilee, Negev, Soviet Jewry) 274, 290; armistice agreements, 334, 446, 514, 593, 631–2n, 638n; cease-fire agreements, 307, 310, 310n, 325n, 330n, 340, 347, 351, 383, 391, 407n, 422n, 426, 431n, 446n, 522n
Arab League, 85, 85n, 103, 119, 122, 124, 137, 142, 144n, 164, 208, 257–8, 259, 273–4, 317, 370, 376, 552, 553n, 620, 620–1, 626, 630, 663, 664–5, 868
Arab League of National Liberation, 178
Arab Legion, 274, 325n, 353
Arab Liberation Army, 407n
Arab revolt, 12n, 114n
Arab state in Palestine (*see* Palestine)
Arab states (*see also* under individual countries), 88, 141, 166–7, 313, 531, 829, 866, 899; and Arab–Israeli War, 317, 334, 527, 595, 694; and Israel, 334, 425, 709, 867, 868, 941; and Palestine question, 74, 86, 163, 164, 166–7, 178, 208, 216, 238, 240, 513; security pact, 553, 555, 621; and USSR, 121, 129, 141, 239, 496, 924
Arabs in Palestine (*see* Palestinian Arabs)
ARAMCO, 262n
Aranne (Aharonovich), Zalman, 613, 663, 666–7, 808n
Argaman, Zeev, **678,** 679, **679–83, 686–8, 695–8, 700–1, 705,** 762–5, 790n, *801–2,* **932–3**
Argentina, 543n
Argov, Meir, 869
Armenian SSR, repatriation to, 223n, 225n
arms race (*see also* nuclear weapons), 547, 548
arms supplies to Middle East, 252, 255, 256, 260, 264, 285, 290, 313, 631, 636–8, 716, 818
arms supplies to Arabs, by Czechoslovakia, 255, 256, 264; by Great Britain, 256, 274–6, 656, 690; by US, 254n, 260, 297; by USSR, 563, 617; by Yugoslavia, 264
arms supplies to Jews, 250–2, 266, 272, 276, 288, 300, 307, 650, 694, 716, 776; by Czechoslovakia, 255, 256, 264n, 291, 325, 636; by Great Britain, 274, 276, 637, 690; by US, 254n, 260, 285, 297, 617, 823; by USSR, 255, 285n, 291, 301, 307, 313, 376, 400–1, 409–10, 459, 463, 549, 584, 617; by Yugoslavia, 264n, 291, 325
Arokh, Arye, 679, 683, 697, 719, 816, 834, 839, 860
Arutiunov, R., **870–2**
Assefat Hanivharim, 108, 206
Athenagoras, Archimandrite, 307n
Atlantic Charter, 34, 73, 87n
Atroshchenkov, Pavel Samoilovich, **57–8**
Attlee, Clement, 121nn, 158, 186
Auschwitz, 88, 356
Auster, Daniel, 434n
Austin, Warren, 265, 657
Australia, 148n, 210, 212, 230, 233, 278n, 351n, 397n, 552n, 557, 575n, 754
Austria, 4, 26, 44, 142, 143, 147, 298, 676, 892, 916, 918–19
Avetisov, **311–13**
Avidan (Walter), Moshe, 717
Avidan (Walter), Yosef, 884, 884n
Avner (Hirsch), Gershon, 892n, **896–7, 900–1,** 901, **903–11,** *912–15,* **915–21**
Avnon, Zvi, 705–7
Avriel (Überall), Ehud, 264, *313–14,* 408, 449n, 450, 488n, 814
al-Azr, Anis, 756
Azzam, Abd-ul-Rahman, 119, 121

Bakulin, Ivan Nikolaevich, **205–11, 212–17,** 226n, 228n, 265n, **282, 291, 304, 345–6,** 365, 366n, 387nn, 393, **394–5, 402, 403,** *404,* **409–10,** 411n, **427–8, 429,** 436n, *442,* **446, 452–4,** 463, **467,** 492, **498–9,** *499–504,* 500n,

510–14, 521–3, 525–8, 534, 534–8, 539–41, 541, **542–4,** 697n
Balfour Declaration, 27, 101–5 *passim,* 119n, 121, 155n, 162, 169, 181–4 *passim,* 205, 239, 608
Balkans, 4, 54, 80, 454n, 478, 479
Baltic States, 1n, 3n, 26, 46, 74, 96, 114n, 489
al-Bandak, Abdallah, 34, 178n
Baranov, Leonid Semenovich, *283–4, 286–91*
Barchacz, Alexander, 899
Barian, 64n, 106, 107
Barnea, Shoshana, 598n
Barnea, Yisrael, 472n, 543, **578–9,** 582, *597–8,* 603
Bartur, Moshe, 895, 933n
Baruch, Bernard M., 260n
Bar-Yehuda, Yisrael, 717
Barzilai, Yisrael, 137
Bashaar, 572
Basilov, Maj.-Gen., **125**
Bazarov, Semen Tarasovich, 665, 667n, 723n, **748–9, 749–51,** 759n, 794n, **851–4, 862–4**
Beeley, Harold, 425n
Begin, Menahem, 213n
Bein, Walter, 143n
Bejerano, Moshe, 393–4, 394n, 443n, 587n, 588, 682–3
Belgium, 44, 230, 770, 906
Belorussian SSR, 6n, 46, 47, 50n, 148, 165, 359, 393, 499, 523n, 543, 568, 589n, 773, 774, 877
Ben-Aharon, Yitzhak, 301, 821–3
Beneš, Eduard, *60–6,* 79, 165, 313n
Ben-Gurion, David, **11–13,** 19, **70–2, 75–7,** 76n, *82–4,* 92n, 97n, *124,* 133, 198, 199, 201, 210, *229–32,* 250, 252n, *264,* 271, 272n, 325–6, **327,** 346, 348, 370, *376,* 381, **395, 400–1,** 402, *406,* **422–3,** 425, 430, 440, 452, 452n, 454, 550, 552, 554n, 558n, 562, 574, 585n, 593, 607, 610, 611, 615, 621, 688n, 689, 699, 702, 712, 729n, 735–7, 742, 794, 818, 820, 821n, 824n, 839, 849n, **855–8,** 868n, 875n, 879, 880–1, 935n, 943n
Benjamin, Archimandrite, 307n
Bentov, Mordechai, 341n, 475, 715–6
Bentsur (Peterfy), Shmuel, 874, *891–2*
Ben-Zvi, Rachel, 36
Ben-Zvi, Yitzhak, 11n, **35–42,** 252n, 454n, 881, 934n
Bergelson, David, 301, 568, 653
Berger, Binyamin–Herzl, 616
Beria, Lavrentii Pavlovich, 228n, 270n, 460n, 505n, 517n, 671n, 728n, 759n, 860, 888n
Berligne, Eliahu Meir, 36, 41
Berman (Radai), Haim, 137, 222, **266–8,** 326
Bernadotte, Folke, 313, 330nn, 331, 331nn, 360n, 373, 378, 383, 396
Bernadotte Plan, 335, 364, 367, 368, 369, 371, 381, 384–5, 396n, 414, 418, 427, 536
Berry, 15
Bessarabia, 1n, 96, 388, 568
Beterem, 419, 420n, 569, 618, 627
Bevin, Ernest, 122, 148, 162, 166–7, 170, 171, 177, 186, 187, 191, 199, 367, 464, 621, 626
Bialer, Yoel, 328
Biiazi, **311–13**
Biltmore Program, 201, 220
Birecki, Henryk, 899
Birobidzhan, 7, 154, 297, 374, 455, 456, 544n, 569, 777, 820
Blaustein, Jacob, 715
Bodrov, Mikhail Fedorovich, 256, 891, 900n, 923n, **930**
Bogdanov, Georgi, 889
Bogomolov, Aleksandr Efremovich, 728n, 744n, 750, 759n
Bolivia, 95
Bolshevik Revolution (*see* October Revolution)
Borisov, 304
Brandeis, Louis, 102
Brilej, Jože, 204n
Britain (*see* Great Britain)
Brit Shalom, 34n
Brodetsky, Selig, 8, 19
Bruslov, Iurii M., 219
Budennyi, Semen Mikhailovich, 680
Buev, M., **304, 577**
Bughici, Simon, 887

Bukovina, 1n
Bulganin, Nikolai, 270n, 460n, 505n, 517n, 671n, 728n, 759n, 842, 888n, 933n
Bulgaria, 97n, 358n, 886, 886n, 887 896n, 897n; Jewish emigration from (*see also* immigration to Palestine), 97n, 415, 550n; Jews in, 99, 203, 358; legation in Israel, 885; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, **895**
Bunche, Ralph 391, 396
Bund, 55, 55n, 220, 837
Burma, 478
Burstein, 645
Bushuev, P.A., 680
Byrnes, James, 162, 166

Cadogan, Alexander, 113n, 114n, 246
Canada, 58n, 66n, 153, 210, 212, 230n, 233, 316, 557, 639
Carlebach, Azriel, 570
cease-fires (*see* Arab–Israeli War)
Cecil, Robert, 183
Chigar'kov, N.N., **767–8,** *844–5*
China, 265, 383, 478, 490, 549; and Israel, 585, 909, 913; Nationalist, 620; People's Republic of, 383, 490, 549, 564n, 585, 612n 632, 657, 664, 666, 693
Choral Synagogue (Moscow), 301n, 410–11, 544, 648n, 686, 745, 834, 835, 836–7, 942–3; Meyerson's visits to, 339, 376–8, 402, 461, 554n, 652, 864n
Churchill, Winston, 34n, 68n, 102, 121n, 141, 153, 162, 182, 183, 185, 379, 640, 907n, 918, 921,
Cioroiu, Nicolae, 583n
civil aviation, 159n
Clapp, Gordon, 491
Clark, Mark, 828n
Clark-Kerr, Archibald (Lord Inverchapel), 152
Clayton, Gilbert Falkingham, 258–9
Clementis, Vladimir, 609
Cohn, Haim, **685**
Cold War, 480, 490, 530, 546, 583, 584, 640, 733, 860
Colombia, 228nn
Cominform, 365, 449, 475, 530, 562, 565, 610, 791, 847, 849
Commission for the Preparation of Peace Agreements and Postwar Settlement, 100–5, 117
Communist Party of Israel (*see* Maki)
Communist Party of Palestine (*see* Palestine Communist Party)
Communist Party of the United States, 150
Conciliation Commission (*see* UN General Assembly)
Congress of Arab Workers, 512
Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), 220
Constituent Assembly (*see* Israel, UN Constituent Assembly)
Cordier, Andrew Wellington, 657
Cornwallis, Kinahan, 86n
Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults (CARC), 376–8, 410–11
Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (CAROC), 382, 642n, 886
Creech Jones, Arthur, 166, 170
Crimea, 2n, 259, 455, 455n, 649, 654, 662n, settlement of Jews in, 850n
Crimean Tatars (*see* Tatars)
Cripps, Stafford, 14n, 15
Crossman, Richard, 156n
Crum, Bartley, 715
Cuba, 95
Cunningham, Alan, 250n
Curcija, 213
Curzon line, 6
Cyprus, 235n, 273n, 351
Czechoslovakia (*see also* arms supplies, immigration to Palestine, Soviet bloc), 44, 47, 60n, 95n, 142–3, 147, 165, 230n, 282n, 343, 388, 408, 417, 457, 477, 545n, 550n, 564, 565, 845, 876n, 913; and Israel, 291, 302, 846–7, 869, 876, 888, 892; Jews in (*see also* displaced persons, refugees, Slansky trial), 4, 26, 859, 928n; at UN, 210, 212, 219, 230, 233, 369, 523n, 545n, 665, 894

Dafni, Reuven, 928
Daily Express, 432
Daily Mail, 160
Davar, 275, 320, 381, 498, 509, 563, 602, 607, 611, 627, 666n, 717, 864n
Davis, Monett Bain, 699
Dead Sea, 103, 367, 379, 380, 396, 471n, 596
De Gaulle, Charles, 73n
Dekanozov, Vladimir Grigor'evich, 50n, 53n, *57–8, 84–5, 90–2,* 94n, *112–17,* 128n, *144–6, 146–7*
Denisov, Andrei Ivanovich, 387n, *403,* **819**
Denmark, 95, 214n, 225n
Dertinger, Georg, 795n
Deutscher, Isaac, 914n
Dimitrov, Georgi, 565
Dinaburg (Dinur), Ben-Zion, 573, 645, 813
displaced persons (DPs), 186, 193, 197, 203, 218, 228n, 229n, 237, 298, 414
Dneprov, 134
Dobkin, Eliahu (Il'ia), 14, 21, 33, **90**
Doctors' Plot, 850–1, 854–64, 869–70, 873–4, 876–8, 884, 890, 890n, 891, 893n, 894
Donat, Aleksandr, 599n
Dragunskii, David, 301
Dubin, Mordechai, 545
Dubinsky, David, 568
Duce, James T., 262
Dulles, John Foster, 916

Eastern Europe (*see* Soviet bloc)
Eban, Abba (Aubrey), 307, *310,* **311, 317–18,** 367, 371, 372, 391, 431, 522, *545,* 551n, **628–34, 636–41,** 655, 663, 690–3, **722–7,** *779–80,* 827, 840, 841, **849**, 851, 863, 893n, *927*
Eden, Anthony, 86, 621n, 761n
Efanov, I., **931–2**
Egorov, 643
Egorov, P.A., 850n
Egypt (*see also* Suez Canal), 73n, 85n, 87, 95, 119nn, 121n. 123, 140, 141n, 164, 185, 258, 334, 370, 407, 553n, 595, 621, 620–1, 630, 755n, 760n, 761, 831, 866; and Great Britain, 136, 164, 370, 372, 396, 430, 630, 688n; and Israel, 370, 399, 426, 431, 446n, 820, 826; Israeli military operations against, 407n, 422n, 459n; and Palestine, 145, 399; at UN, 232, 265
Egyptian–Israeli Mixed Armistice Commission, 446, 681n
Ehrlich, Henryk, 55, 60
Ehrlich, Wolf, 215n
Eilat, 396, 397, 655
Einstein, Albert, 53n, 652
Eisenhower, David Dwight, 828, 860n, 907n
Eisenstadt, Shmuel, 510
Elath, Eliahu (*see* Epstein)
Elected Assembly (*see* Assefat Hanivharim)
Eliash, Mordechai, 291, *528–32*
Eliashiv, (Friedman), Shmuel, 324, 330n, **340–2,** 361, **371–3, 373–4, 405–6, 407–9,** *412,* 420n, **424–5, 426–7, 430–2, 432–4, 435–6,** 436n, **440–2,** *449, 455–6,* **457, 469–72,** *473–6,* **498,** 499, **518,** *532–3, 534,* 541n, 550, **550–1, 555–6,** *557–8,* 560, 573, 583, *585–6, 586,* 590n, **593, 619,** 620, 636, 646n, 650, **676–8,** 683n, 684n, 702, 716, **719–20,** 723n, 727–8, **728–9,** 733, 739–41, 744, **744–5, 745, 746–8,** 748–9, 750, 751–2, 756, 758–9, **759–60, 780–4,** 785, **794–5,** 807, 808–9, *815–16,* **830–1,** 832n, 833n, 838, 838–9, **840–1, 850, 859–61, 864, 876–8,** 882, 926, 933, 935–6, **937–8, 939–40,** 940–1, **941–4**
Elkhovskii, Vladimir Evgen'evich, 382
Elmaleh, Avraham, 36, 41
emigration of Jews (*see also* immigration, reunification of families), from Soviet bloc (*see also* under individual countries), 366, 464, 479, 485, 486–9, 490, 497, 550n, 568, 609, 732, 761, 815–16, 884, 892, 905–6, 914, 918–20; from USSR, 6, 8, 14–19 *passim,* 24, 49–50, 126n, 546n, 549, 550n, 642, 644, 649, 659, 662–3, 673, 730, 745, 747, 751, 769, 770, 771–8 *passim,* 780, 795, 796–9, 806, 808, 808nn, 863, 869, 894, 910, 939, 941

Entezam, Nasrollah, 661n, 691
Epshtein, Shakhno, 111, 117
Epstein (Elath), Eliahu, 13, 15, **16–24,** 31, **53–4,** 76n, **82–4,** *135–7,* **203–5, 217–18, 219–221, 222,** 250, 251, 252, 258–262, 262–3, *285, 301, 305,* **305,** *306, 307, 310,* 444
Erem, Moshe, 105, 137, 138
Eremin, 696–7
Erenburg, Il'ia, 301, 352, 356n, 366, 373, 374, 402, 411, 433, 602, 653
Eritrea, 610n
Ershov, Pavel Ivanovich, 304n, 305, 309, *311–13,* **315–16, 322–3,** 323, **325–6, 330–2,** 334, 337, 338, 338n, 340, **344–5, 346–9, 363–5, 367–70, 375, 379–81,** 382n, **386–7,** 394, 395n, 402, 403, 407, 408, 422–3, 426, 426n, 429, 432–4, 435–6, 440, 441, **442,** 450, 451, 457, 467, 507n, **553–4,** 555, 558–60, **561,** 572, 579n, 581n, **589–90,** 593, 593n, **595–6,** 601n, **615, 616–19,** *623,* 627, **635,** *635,* **636, 644, 645, 655, 660–3, 663–5,** 666n, 670n, *674,* 684n, **688–9, 689–90, 693–4,** *695,* **698–700, 701–2,** 711, **711–13, 714, 715–18,** *718,* **720–1,** 723n, 729, **730–1, 733–4, 735–8, 739–41, 741–3,** *752–3,* **760–2, 786–7, 787–90, 794,** *799–800,* **800–1,** 802, **803–4,** 805n, **805–6,** *810,* **842, 842, 845–6,** *848, 851–4,* 862n, **868–70, 874–5, 879–81, 881, 885**
Eshkol, Levi (*see* Shkolnik)
Estonia, 1, 46, 47, 790
European Defence Pact, 260n
Evatt, Herbert, 397
Evening News, 140
Exodus (immigrant ship) 225, 229, 356
Eynikeyt, 111n, 151, 154n, 293, 297, 298, 299, 378, 412n
Eyres, H.M., 24n
Eytan, Walter, **165, 266–8,** 316, 326, 360–2, 370, *378, 401–2, 411–12,* 425n, *458, 556–7,* 558–60, 663–5, **666–7,** 698, *705,* 711, 759n, **847, 851,** *865–7,* 868n, *893–5,* **902, 927,** 934
Fabregat, Enrique Rodriguez, 229
Fadeev, Aleksandr Aleksandrovich, 295
Faluja, 407n, 422n, 431
Faruq, King of Egypt, 88, 423, 820n
Fast, Howard, 549
Fedorin, Mitrofan Petrovich, **323–4, 328–30,** 341n, **443–4, 447–8,** 501–4, **539, 571–3**
Fedotov, P.V., 510n
Fefer, Itsik, 52n, 53, 58, 59, 66n, 295, 378, 562n, 568, 653
Feisal, Emir, 183
Feller, Abraham Howard, 657
Finland, 45
Fischer, Ruth, 625
Fishman, Yehuda Leib, 453
Fomin, Gennadii, 936
Forrestal, James, 262, 464, 464n
France 44, 45, 47, 136, 182, 205, 265, 274, 418, 425, 431, 431n, 432, 502, 530, 560, 636n, 684, 698, 699, 716, 718, 725, 738n, 748–56 *passim,* 771, 792, 810, 830, 831n, 840n, 841, 924
Franjiyeh, Hamid, 216n
French National Committee, 44
Freyd, Emanuel, 49
Friedberg (Prihar), Zvi, 341
Friedman, Shmuel (*see* Elashiv)
Frumkin, Aleksandr, 301

Galilee, 230, 230n, 275, 348, 364, 368, 371, 380, 390, 397, 409
Garfunkel, Sofia, 733n
Garreau, Roger, 636n, 638
Gaza (*see also* Arab government in Palestine), 139, 140, 250, 379, 380, 396, 399, 407, 422n, 431, 446, 471, 493
Gazette d'Israël, 357
Gelber, Lionel, **148–50,** 157, **237–8**
Gelblum, Arie, 898
Gel'man, Polina, 301
General Zionist Party, 328n, 420n, 454, 805, 845, 900n
Genin, Izrail' Adol'fovich, 427, 432, 602
Genoa Conference, 375n
Georgian SSR, 4, 355, 700n, 701
Georgievskii, K.A., 113n, 114n

Gerasimov, P.I., **897–9**
Germany, 100, 290, 331, 332, 477, 530, 549, 569, 692, 762, 828–9, 858, 868, 885, 910, 918; and Israel, 490, 590, 692, 833, 910; reparations and restitution of Jewish property, 684, 696n, 749–51, 762n, 794–5, 795n, 800–1, 801–2, 815, 831, 832–3, 868, 873; in WWII, 3nn, 4, 5n, 24, 43–4, 125n, 455n, 456, 509n, 647, 654, 779
Ghouri, Albert, 308nn
Gil, Emmanuel, **318–19**
Glubb, John Bagot, 259
Gnedykh, Vladimir Vasil'evich, 133, **525–8**
Goldberg, Ben-Zion, 294, 295
Goldmann, Nahum, 1n, 8n, 19, 29, 53n, **55–6, 60–6, 69, 79–81**, 89, **97–8, 98–9, 128–30,** 182n, 198, 405, 802n, 849, 849n
Goldstücker, Eduard, 636
Golubev, Konstantin D., **142–4,** 146
Golunskii, 228n, 265n
Gomulka, Wladyslaw, 564n
Gorkin, Aleksandr Fedorovich, 937
Gorky, Maksim, 358
Gottwald, Klement, 256
Grady (*see* Morrison–Grady)
Graham Harrison, William Montagu, 185
Grant, Will, 155
Great Britain (*see also* arms supplies, Labour Party, Negev, Palestinian Arabs, Transjordan, White Paper), 5n, 9, 14, 16, 44, 90, 139, 189, 194, 199, 316, 628, 863; and Arab states, 86, 259, 690; and Egypt (*see* Egypt); and Israel, 367, 369, 426, 481, 469, 513, 537, 688n, 690, 694, 762, 840n; mandate in Palestine, 108, 182, 206, 206n, 208, 669n, 670n, 714n; Middle East policy, 90, 139, 189, 194; and Palestine question (*see also* White Paper), 4, 9, 16, 86–7, 91, 102, 109, 139–41, 145, 160, 162–4, 167, 177–8, 184, 205, 209, 216, 246, 251, 258–9, 269, 275–6, 280, 513, 521, 526, 527, 631; and partition of Palestine, 139, 140, 167, 184, 251, 258, 259, 269, 280, 426, 513, 521; at UN, 169–70, 180, 181, 367, 383, 385, 396, 676n, 722, 774, 810
Greater Syria, 103, 104n, 240, 257
Greece, 44, 557
Greek Orthodox Church, 308, 642
Greek–Turkish War (1921), 349n
Greenberg, Haim, **198,** 599
Gribanov, M.G., **749–51,** 795n, 832n
Grigg, P.J., 57n
Gromyko, Andrei, 69, *97–8, 98–9,* 172, 188, 196, 198, 199, 199n, 227n, 230n, *249,* 251n, 262nn, 264, *271–7,* 307, **326,** 363, 460n, 505, 505nn, 514, **515–16, 532–3,** *534–8, 539–41,* 543, 554n, 575n, *577,* 580n, 666–7n, **670–1,** 671, **674,** *720–1,* 723n, **727–8,** 728, **752–3, 756–7,** 759n, **785–6, 792–3,** 808n, 830n, 939, **940–1,** 940n; speeches at UN General Assembly (May 1947), **189–96,** 198–202, 204, 217, 218, 221, 223, **242–8, 277–80**
Gross, Ernest, 632
Grossman, Meir, *187–8*
Grotewohl, Otto, 795n, 802, 833
Gruber, Ruth, 157
Gruenbaum, Yitzhak, 33, 42, 83, *88–9,* 90n, 434, 645
Guatemala, 230n
Gusev, Fedor Tarasovich, 14n, **15–16,** 96, 105, 113n, 114n, 251n, 326, **350–2,** 365, 406n, 460n, 467n, 533n, 759n

Haaretz, 381, 509, 627
Habib, Avshalom, 213n
Habibi, Emil, 178n
Haboker, 419, 429n, 562
Hacohen, David, 291, 307, 771, 778
Hador, 562, 607, 612, 618, 689
Hagana, 206, 215, 271
Haifa, 230, 369, 372, 381, 385
Haifa Institute of Technology (Technion), 447
Hakki, Badi, 718
Halak, Eddie, 642
Halevi, Moshe, 341, 573
Halperin, M., 849
al-Hama, 698n

Hamashkif, 419, 602
Hamilton, Thomas, 722
Hamlin, Isadore, **188–9**
Haolam hazeh, 509
Hapoel Sports Association, **318–19**
Harari, 324
Harari, Yizhar 661, 823
Hare, Raymond A., 470
Harel, Isser, 928
Harmer, Yolande, **118–20, 124, 132–4**
Harrison (*see* Graham Harrison)
Harvey, Oliver, 17n
Hashemites, 240, 258
Hashomer Hatsair, 138, 143, 188, 201
al-Hayat, 163
Hazan, Yaacov, 615
Hebrew, 8, 28, 34, 38, 42, 61, 78, 242, 322, 323, 377, 378, 442, 447, 539, 602, 621, 643, 652, 695, 696, 701, 768, 834, 842, 844, 845, 872, 935, 936
Hebrew Communist Party, 328
Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 42, 272, 275, 329, 504
Henderson, Loy, 254, 259
Herald Tribune, 152
Herut Party, 454, 475, 535, 562, 625
Hertz, Joseph, 49n
Herzl, Theodor, 102
Herzog, Chaim, **266–8, 457,** 458
Herzog, Isaac Halevi, 3n
Histadrut (Labour Federation of Israel/Palestine), 11, 19, 56–7, 92, 110, 199, 341, 363, 518, 590, 603, 607, 612, 622
Hitler, Adolf, 9, 10, 20, 26, 33, 44, 45, 48, 60, 185, 186, 187, 259, 288, 352, 354, 357, 530, 654, 858
Holocaust (*see also* Auschwitz), 44, 89, 150, 193
holy places (*see also* Jerusalem), 308, 347, 380, 533, 559
Honduras, 95
Horowitz, David, 76, 229
Hula Valley, 699, 709, 711, 718, 724
Hungary (*see also* immigration to Palestine, Soviet bloc), 44, 46; emigration from, 415, 460, 487; and Israel, 302, 887; Jews in, 80, 203, 906
Husayn, ibn Ali, 205
Husayn, King of Jordan, 183
al-Husayni, Amin, 110, 158, 162, 184, 258
al-Husayni, Jamal, 163, 167, 202, 212, 216

Iakovlev, Vladimir, 137
Ianchenko, Ivan, 118
Idelson, Beba, 92
Ignat'ev, Semen Denisovich, 796
Ilanit, Feige, 324
Il'ichev, Ivan Ivanovich, 352, 750
immigration to Palestine/Israel, 39, 51, 52, 62, 65, 72, 80, 87, 103, 169, 186, 235, 237, 273, 314, 316, 323, 330, 331, 334, 340, 346, 416, 425, 450, 467, 487, 512, 677, 694, 746, 747; absorption of, 40, 68, 71, 76, 77, 103, 173, 346, 375, 504, 506, 536, 745; from Bulgaria, 97, 99; from Czechoslovakia, 511, 542; from Hungary, 98, 147, 464–5, 488–9, 490, 497, 548, 549, 607, 734; from Iraq, 599; from Morocco, 414; from Poland, 49, 80, 142, 147, 457; from Romania, 97, 99, 314, 464–5, 488–9, 490, 497, 511, 549, 607, 673, 712, 734, 862; from Soviet bloc, 409, 414, 422, 457, 464, 465, 479, 486, 487, 489, 497, 518, 528–9, 538n, 545n, 548, 549, 550n, 568, 607, 609, 761, 806, 816, 884, 906, 908, 910, 918, 919; from US, 422; from USSR, 14, 15, 16, 19, 37, 180, 366, 389, 428, 436, 438, 439, 456, 457, 548, 549, 580, 607, 613, 648, 652, 659, 662, 673, 706, 733, 740, 745, 747, 749, 758, 765, 769–98 *passim*, 808, 820, 863, 869, 894, 914, 939, 941; from Yugoslavia, 415
Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society (*see also* Orthodox Palestine Society, Russian Palestine Society), 113, 114, 668, 685, 703, 804, 929
India, 557, 633
Indochina, 478, 585
Inter-Allied Control Commission, 100
Intourist, 524
Inverchapel, Lord (*see* Clark-Kerr)

Iran, 95, 495, 639, 866
Iraq (*see also* immigration to Palestine), 63, 95, 123, 232, 258, 376, 829; and Palestine, 80, 145, 368
Irgun Zvai Leumi (IZL), 118n, 213n, 214, 272, 381, 535
Israel (*see also* Arab–Israeli conflict, Arab–Israeli War of 1948, China, Egypt, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, immigration, Knesset, Romania, Syria, Transjordan, Yugoslavia), 182, 281, 493, 498; and Arab states, 321, 595, 626; Constituent Assembly, 201, 316n, 364, 430, 452, 454, 509n; constitution, 315, 742; economy, 512, 535, 536, 613, 693; foreign policy of (*see also* Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs), 303, 321, 432, 454, 457, 459, 461, 476–82, 497, 529, 531, 537, 544, 584, 607–12 *passim*, 617, 650, 651, 675, 806, 819; government, 452, 453, 536, 613, *753–5, 756–7,* **757–8,** *855–8, 901;* parliament (*see* Knesset); press, 429, 451, 475, 554, 561, 562–70, 573, 594, 605, 609, 610, 618, 619, 624, 627, 695, 713, 717, 739, 759, 808, 810, 821, 845, 868, 885, 909; recognition of, 302, 332, 343, 349, 367, 432, 512, 513, 552, 624; and Soviet bloc (*see* Soviet bloc); and Soviet Jews, 378, 450, 651–2, 686–7, 745, 808; UN delegation, 311, 348, 367, 427, 454, 497, 576, 586, 589, 609–10, 633, 660, 663, 664, 723, 765, 773, 775, 784, **893–5**, 914; and US (*see* US–Israeli relations); and USSR (*see* Israeli–Soviet relations)
Israel Defence Forces (IDF), 351, 541
Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 437, 467, *580–1, 590–1,* **592,** *594, 616, 625–7, 641–3, 665–6, 671–3, 674–6, 685,* **711,** 717, *719–20, 728–9, 744–5, 745, 759–60, 769–71, 794–5,* 803, 808, 810, 825, *834–8, 840–1, 849, 850, 864,* **875**, *876–8,* **883–4, 889, 890**, *892, 896–7, 900–1, 932–3, 937–8, 939–40;* East European Division, 302, 303, **659, 846;** embassy in Washington, *873–4;* legation in Bulgaria, *902;* legation in Netherlands, **890;** legations in Eastern Europe, *550–1, 659, 707–11, 889;* legation in USSR, 333, 336, 339, 342, 362, 383, 427, 436–7, 438–9, *440–2,* 445, *457,* 513, *550–1,* 578, 579, 581, 582, 585, *587,* 588, 597, 598, 603, *619,* 624, 651–2, 680, 682, 695n, *705–7, 711,* 719, 720, *805,* 807, **832–3,** *882–3,* 889; missions abroad, *847, 851, 883–4*
Israel–USSR Friendship Society, 538, 572, 604n, 620, 635, 714
Israeli Arabs, 78, 732, 742–3
Israeli Scientific Research Council, 763
Israeli–Soviet relations (*see also* Israel–USSR Friendship Society, League for Friendly Relations with the USSR, USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, V League), 318, 321, 324, 352, 353, 360, 381, 391, 426, 432, 443–4, 454, 455, 461–2, 473, 475, 485, 495, 497, 513, 537, 538, 543, 546, 547, 549, 600–14, 618, 622, 624, 625, 650, 663, 672, 680, 675, 694, 700, 702, 733, 753, 755, 765, 773, 806, 809, 822, 890, 902, 904, 908, 916, 919, 920; commercial relations, 404, 459, 463, 464, 472, 496, 505, 515, 533, 540, 587, 605, 625, 682–3, 696–7, 809, 895, 931–2, 934; cultural ties, 312, 394n, 395, 395nn, 442n, 403, 434, 444, 447–8, 501, 503, 509, 813, 814, 819, 840, 844, 845, 848; diplomatic relations, 283, 285, 854n, 875n, 917–22, 923n, 926, 927, 927n, 933, 934, 936, 937; economic ties, 393, 409; educational ties, 539; military ties, 343, 376, 457, 459, 463, 464, 540, 541; recognition of Israel, 302, 513, 624; scientific ties, 763, 764, 805, 810; severance of relations, 883–926 *passim;* Soviet citizens in Israel, 361, 581, 618, 705; sports ties, 319, 834–8; transportation ties, 443
Italy, 560
al-Ittihad, 163, 276
Iudin, 117
Ivliev, M.I., **925–6**
Izvestiia, 709

Jaffa, 230, 274, 368, 371, 390
Japan, 477
Jebb, H.M. Gladwyn, 690, 722, 725
Jerusalem (*see also* UN Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine, UN Partition Plan, UNSCOP), 275, 348, 367, 371, 372, 376, 385, 390, 397, 398, 505, 593, 629, 661, 703; internationalization of, 241, 364, 368, 385, 483, 484, 485, 556–7, 558–9, 574, 575, 610, 638, 641, 642, 668, 703; Israeli stance on, 364, 372, 469, 532, 559, 560, 574; Jews in, 268, 629; partition of, 167, 380, 385, 390, 576; transfer of Israeli capital to, 924; trusteeship of (*see* UN Trusteeship Council); US stance on, 347, 397; USSR stance on, 389, 398, 483, 484, 485, 491, 556, 559, 575n, 610, 623, 628, 641n, 656, 810, 811, 924, 927
Jerusalem Patriarchate, 538n
Jerusalem Post, 717, 818
Jewish Agency for Palestine, 1–3, 13, 15, 16, 19, 24, 35, 51, 52, 68, 72, 75, 78, 98, 99, 108, 129, 145, 167, **180–1, 182–7**, 187, 206, 220, 236, 256, 271, 265, 272, 321, 439, 511; Executive, 68, 70–2 199, *203–5,* 206n, *217–18, 219–21, 237–8;* Political Department, *132–4;* and UNSCOP, 197, 210, 214
Jewish Aid Fund, 60
Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, 43, 65, *66–7,* 78, 81, 106, 107, 111, 181, 283, 291, 292–301, 366, 412, 859
Jewish Autonomous Region (*see* Birobidzhan)
Jewish Brigade, 9n, 51n
Jewish Council for Russian War Relief, 53, 59, 155
Jewish Labour Party, 16
Jewish National Council (*see* Vaad Leumi)
Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemet), 2n, 27, 39, 427, 645
Jewish refugees (*see* refugees, displaced persons)
Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 437
Jewish underground (*see also* Irgun Zvai Leumi, Stern Group), 122n
Jews (*see* American Jewry, Holocaust, Soviet Jewry, and under individual countries)
Jews in Palestine (*see also yishuv,* Assefat Hanivharim, Vaad Leumi)
Johnson, Herschel, 228, 237, 369, 369n
Joint (*see* American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee)
Jordan (*see* Transjordan)
Jordan River, 68n, 127n, 183, 274, 356n, 698, 699, 939n, 940, 944
Joseph, Bernard (Dov), 33, 70, 421, 453

Kaddar, Shlomo, **769–71**
Kaganovich, Iu.M., *394–5*
Kaganovich, Lazar' Moiseevich, 270n, 352, 460n, 505n, 517n, 671n, 728n, 759n, 774, 888n, 933n
Kalinin, Mikhail Ivanovich, 36
Kalugin, M.P., **714, 720–1,** 729n, 789n
Kaplan, Eliezer, 53–4, 70, 381, 430, 453
Kaplansky, Shlomo, 105, 447
Kapustin, Aleksander Nikolaevich, 89
Karasov, Lt.-Col., 125n
Karelo-Finnish SSR, 47
Karlovci group, 93n
Karpov, Gennadii Nikolaevich, 769–71
Karpov, Georgii Grigor'evich, **307–9,** *337–8, 420–1,* 642, 886
Katznelson (*see* Nissan)
Kavtaradze, Sergei Ivanovich, **13–14,** 16n, *31–2, 73–4,* 75n, **95–6,** 114n, 147n
Kehat, Moshe, **834–8**
Kenen, Isaiah (Si), 188
Kenez, Peter, 311n
Keren Hayesod, 39, 447
Keren Kayemet (*see* Jewish National Fund)
Khaikin, S.N., 297–8
Khangulov, Viktor, 222, 223n, 225n
Kheifets, Grigorii Markovich, **283–4, 286–91**
Kherson, 671n
Kholodkov, V.A., *812*
Khrushchev, Nikita Sergeevich, 671n, 728n, 759n, 888n, 933n

al-Khuri, Faris, 167, 202
kibbutzim, 2, 124
Kielce massacre, 143n
al-Kilani, Rashid Ali, 63, 110, 185
Kimche, Jon, 563, 566
Kirkuk–Haifa pipeline, 353
Kirsanov, Stepan, 147n
Kiselev, Evgenii Dmitrievich, 58
Kislova, L.D., *77–9,* 387n, 403n, **508–10**
Klinov, Yeshayahu, **32–5,** 342, 573
Knatchbull Hugessen, Hugh, 13, 17, 58, 58n
Knesset, 506n, 509n, 608, 854, 880; Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, 689, 698, 807, 821
Kogan-Bernstein, Yaacov, 102
Kohn, Leo, 326
Kol haam, 199, 201, 502, 509, 542, 562, 572, 585, 601, 717, 857
Komas, 92
Konev, Ivan Stepanovich, 143
Konzhukov, Ismail Bedreddinovich, **362, 588–9**
Kook, Hillel (Peter Bergson), 661
Korea, 585, 585n, 586n
Korean War, 645–6n, 655n, 658, 691, 691n, 693, 722n, 724, 725, 735, 828, 828nn
Korneichuk, Aleksandr Evdokimovich, 455
Korostovtsev, Mikhail, 83, 118, 191
Kosiakina, Iu.F., *443–4, 447–8,* 508–10, *539*
Kostylev, Mikhail Alekseevich, **31–2**
Kosygin, Aleksei Nikolaevich, 460n, 505n, 517n
Kot, Stanislaw, 6n
Kozyrev, Sergei, 226n, 228n, 723n
Kramer, 328
Krasin, Leonid Borisovich, 112n, 114n
Kreizer, Iakov Grigor'evich, 301
Krock, Arthur, 221
Kubovitsky, Leon (*see* Kubovy)
Kubovy, Arye Leon, **88–9,** 876n, 884
Kuibyshev, 15, 20, 22, 24, 35, 52, 57, 58, 65, 71n, 797, 871n
Kuibyshev, Valerian Vladimirovich, 876
Kukin, Aleksandr Mikhailovich, *90, 99–100,* 106, 112
Kulazhenkov, Anatolii Georgievich, 54
Kumykin, Pavel Nikolaevich, 932
Kurilas, Grigorii, 94
Kuznetsov, *74–5*
Kuznetsov, G., 17, 21, 24,
Kuznetsov, Maj. Gen., 147n
Kuznetsov, Vladimir, 92, 518, 607
Kvitko, Lev Moiseevich, 296, 298, 301

Labour Federation of Palestine/Israel (*see* Histadrut)
Labour Party (Great Britain), 185
Labour Party (Israel) (*see* Mapai)
Lange, Oskar, 399
Lapid, Arye, 377
Latin America (*see also* under individual countries), 661n; Jews in, 80;
Latvia, 46
Lausanne Conference (*see also* UN Palestine Conciliation Commission), 470, 471, 505, 514
Lavon (Lubyaniker), Pinhas, 565, 854
Lavrent'ev, Anatolii Iosifovich., 525n, 533n, *561,* 575n, 614n, 618n, **634,** 667n, 702n, **718, 729**
Lawrence, T.E., 183
le Monde, 160
League for Arab–Jewish Cooperation and Rapprochement, 34, 179, 215
League for Friendly Relations/Friendship with the USSR, *130–2,* 323, 328–9, 386, 387n, 408n, 442, 448, 499, 502, 503, 508, 510, 555, 571, 572, 593, 606, 612, 613, 625, 767–8, 814, 842, 844, 870–2, 938
League of National Liberation, 274, 512
League of Nations, 169, 182, 185; Permanent Mandates Commission, 190
Lebanon, 39, 82n, 85n, 119n, 121n, 185, 216n, 369, 407, 424, 656n, 665, 755n; in cease-fire negotiations, 431; Israeli occupation of, 407n; at UN, 232, 317
Lebedev, Viktor Zakharovich, 147n, **137–8**
Lehi (*see* Stern Group)
Lenin, Vladimir Il'ich, 359, 569
Leonid, Archimandrite (Il'ia Khristoforovich Lobachev), 382, 420, 421 440n, 641n, 667n, 669n

Leonov, Leonid Maksimovich, 300
Levant Publishing Company (Lepak), 78
Levavi, Arye, **222–6, 266–8, 302–4,** 322, 326, 332, 339, 382–3, 393, **476–97, 547–8,** 550, **557–8,** 568, *574–5,* 588–9, 594, 616, 620, **667,** 668–70, **673,** 674, *679–83, 686–8, 695–8, 700–1,* 703, **707–11,** 723n, **731–3,** 771n, **790–2, 801–2,** 810n, 814, **815–16,** 853n, **865–7,** 874, 899, *903–11,* **912–15,** *915–21,* 928, 934, 940n
Levin, Yitzhak, 453
Levite, Liova, 34, 137, 138, 363–5, 602n
Libya, 610n
Lie, Trygve, 172, 253, 349, 370, 632, 639, 657
Lifshitz, Zalman, 230nn
Lifshitz Plan, 230, 264
Linton, Ivor Joseph, 1, 8, **8,** 68
Lipsky, Louis, 56n
Literaturnaia gazeta, 615–19 *passim,* 627, 701n
Lithuania, 46, emigration from, 3, 3n, 65n
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich, 29, **29,** 49, 51, 53, 55–6, 83, **100–5,** 117, 132n, 199n
Livneh (Liebenstein), Eliezer, 381, 420n
Liwszyc, David, 390, 391, 392, 399
Lloyd George, David, 183
Loc, Rafael, 165
Locker, Berl, 8, 92, **99–100,** *198*
Lomakin, Ia.M., *508–10*
London Conference on Palestine (Sept. 1946 to Jan. 1947), 145n, 146, 158, 158n, 166, 208
Lopukhin, 606
Lourie, Arthur, *188–9*
Lovett, Robert, 259, 262
Lowdermilk, Walter, 68, 127n, 617
Lozovskii, Solomon Abramovich, 50n, **52–3, 58–60,** 105n, 128n, 131, 132n
Lubyaniker (*see* Lavon)
Luke, S.E.V., 24n
Lundström, Aage N., 331
Lutskii, Vladimir Mikhailovich, 484, 594n, 602
Luxembourg, 44
Lydda (Lod), 325n, 335n, 369, 385, 372, 381
Lysenko, Trofim, 503

Maariv, 554n, 555, 561, 565, 570, 602, 910
McClintock, Robert, 396n
McCloy, John J., 88
McDaniel, Bruce, 823n
McDonald, James, 310n, 346–9, 504, 553, 601n, 715n
MacDonald, James Ramsay, 114n, 184
MacDonald, Malcolm, 102, 184
McGhee, George Crews, 469n, 491, 553n, 700n, 712, 715
McMahon, Arthur Henry, 183
MacMichael, Harold Alfred, 58n
McNeil, Hector, 367, 371, 463
Maev, V., 295
Magen David Adom (*see* Red Shield of David)
Magen Society, **29–30,** 405
Magnes, Judah, 215, 272, 329
Maher, Ahmad, 87n, 88
Maiskii, Ivan Mikhailovich, 1, 2, 2n, 8n, **3–5, 9–10,** *10–11, 11–13,* 15, 16, 18, *25–8,* 44n, 49, 49n, *51–2,* 57, 68, 70, *75–7,* 82, 83, 113n, 114n, 132n
Maki (Israeli Communist Party), 320, 381, 392, 433, 454, 474, 475, 484, 495, 535, 536, 538n, 571, 573, 613, 717, 752, 778, 806, 814, 842, 855, 909, 913
Maksimov, Mikhail Alekseevich, 123n, 125n, **126–8, 144–6, 146–7, 166–8, 174–5,** 251n, **551–3,** 554n
Malenkov, Georgii Maksimilianovich, 228n, 270n, **352–60,** 460n, 505n, 517n, 671n, 728n, 759n, 842n, *885–6,* 860, 888n, *889,* 900n, 927, 933n
Maliarov, V., **112–17,** 125n
Malik, Charles, 317
Malik, Iakov Aleksandrovich, *172,* 175n, 226n, 228nn, 311, 390, 391, 392, 580, 626, 628–34, 638, 656, 657, 658n, 662, 663, 668, 676–8, 691–3, 722–7, 751–2, 824–9, **843, 885–6, 887–8, 889**
Malinovskii, Rodion Iakovlevich, 564

Mandelstam, Max, 102
Maniu, Iuliu, 417
Manrique, Delara Hernández Aurelio, 898
Manuil'skii, Dmitrii Zakharovich, 105n, 392
Mao Tse-tung, 495, 564
Mapai (Israeli Labour Party), 320, 386, 420n, 430, 432n, 433, 473n, 500, 508, 511, 517, 535, 538n, 550n, 602, 604, 608, 613, 625, 733n, 741, 742, 784nn, 845, 870; Central Committee, **198–202**
Mapam (United Workers' Party), 285n, 320, 324n, 328, 363–4, 380–1, 399, 430, 454, 474–5, 485, 536, 538n, 571, 572, 573, 579n, 602, 603, 613, 615, 699, 716, 716n, 717, 735, 736, 741, 742, 752, 806, 842, 845, 909, 913, 913n, 938
Markish, Perets, 568, 653
Marshall, George C., 209, 367, 370, 380n, 702n
Marshall Plan, 238, 260, 260n, 444, 567, 657
Masaryk, Jan, 89, 165
Mediterranean defence alliance, 458n, 480
Meir (*see* Meyerson)
Mekorot Water Company, 408
Mendelson, Morris J., **96–7**
Men'shikov, Mikhail Alekseevich, **393–4,** 464, 540
Menzhinskii, Viacheslav, 876n
Merkulov, Vsevolod Nikolaevich, 44n
Meron, Gershon 408
Mexico, 95
Meyerson, Golda, *222–6,* 224, 225n, 251n, 272, 301, 305, 310, 311, *318–19,* 321, 322–3, 326, 327, 332, 333–6, **336, 339, 339,** *340–2, 345–6,* 350–2, 363, **365–6,** *371–3,* 376, 377, **378,** *396–400,* **401–2,** *405–6, 407–9,* 409, 418, 424, 427–8, 428, **429–30,** *430–2,* 436–7, *438,* **438–9,** *444,* 445, 453, **458,** 458–60, 461–5, **465–6**, 467, 507n, 513, 539, 554n, 591, 791n, 864n, 885, 893n
Mezhdunarodnaia kniga, 394–5, 448, 538n, 813–15, 848,
Michael, King of Romania, 415n
Michurin, Ivan Vladimirovich, 503
Middle East Command, 688n, 754–61 *passim,* 792, 793, 808n, 810, 817, 818, 820, 827, 905
Middle East Defence Organization, 817, 817n
Mignaud, Eli, 357
Migunov, S.P., 404n
Mikhailov, Konstantin Aleksandrovich, 32, 34, 36, 320, **577**, 860
Mikhailov, Nikolai A., 860
Mikhalkov, S.V., 402
Mikhailov, Sergei Sergeevich, 35, 40, 41, 53, 77n, 79n, 93n, 320n
Mikhoels, Solomon, 53, 53n, 58–9, 66n, 81, 653, 850, 859
Mikoian, Anastas, 228n, 460n, 505n, 517n, 671n, 728n, 759n, 933n
Mikunis, Shmuel, 215, 215n, 324, 354, 366n, 432n, 433, 476n, 571, 688, 716, 717, 914
Mints, Isaak Izrailevich, 568
Mishmar Hayarden, 506n
Misr al-Fatath, 136
Moch, Jules, 622, 627
Mohn, Paul, 330n, 331
Molotov, Viacheslav Mikhailovich, 16n, 21, *49–50, 52–3, 58–60, 95–6,* 105n 118, 128n, 172, **226, 227,** *227–8,* **228, 235–6,** *241–2, 249–51, 251–3, 256,* 262n, **269–70,** *281,* **283, 285,** 305n, *326,* 333–6, 336, *376–8,* **383, 384–6,** 386n, *393–4,* 401, 406n, 451n, 460n, 505n, 517n, 533n, 671n, 728n, 759n, 793n, *921–2,* **923,** 925n, **933,** 935n
Molotov–Ribbentrop pact, 6n, 126n
Montgomery, Bernard, 206
Morocco (*see* immigration to Palestine, North African Jews)
Morgan, George, 16
Morgenthau, Henry, Jr., 585, 594n, 868n
Morgn freyheyt, 150n
Morrison, Herbert, 139, 185
Morrison–Grady Plan, 140n, 158n, 161n, 186, 379
Mosaddeq, Mohammad, 732

Moscow Patriarchate, 337, 338, 382, 420n, 520, 667n, 729n, 788, 789, 804, 886; *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, 421
Mount Scopus, 596
al-Mourabet, Gawad, 899
Moyne, Lord (Walter Edward Guinness), 91
Mukhin, Mikhail L., *320–2,* 341n, *360–2,* 500n, 374, 426–7, 440, 440n, 441, 469–72, **499–504,** 572, 601n, **683–4,** 703
Muslim Brotherhood, 73, 101, 101n, 136
Muslims, Soviet, 101, 120n
Mutual Security Act, 821n, 823n

Naharayim, 471
Nahhas, Mustafa, 87n, 595n
al-Najjada, 275
Nakar, Meir, 213n
Namier, Lewis, 68
Namir, Mordecai, 301, 301n, 305n, 332, 362, 376, 387–9, *405–6,* **411–12, 412, 419–20,** 436n, **445, 455–6, 449,** *450–1,* 451, **461–5, 467,** 467, **472, 473–6,** *498,* 498–9, 504–5, **506–7,** 510, **514–15,** 515–16, 517, *518,* 533, *541–2, 542–4,* **544–5,** 545n, *546–7,* **548–50,** 551–3, **581–5, 585–6, 586,** 587n, **587–8, 590–1,** *593,* **594,** *598–600,* 603, **616,** 620–2, **625–7,** 634, **645–6,** 646, 650, **659–60, 665–6,** *666–7, 667, 670–1,* **671–3,** *673,* **674–6**
Naqura, 431n
Narkissos, Archimandrite, 642
Naszkowsky, Marian, 366n
NATO, 458n, 480, 903n
Necas, František, 457
Negev (*see also* UN Security Council), 71, 376, 376n, 379, 390, 391, 414, 458, 462, 504, 506n, 514, 522n, 543; Arab attacks on, 274, 275; in armistice agreement, 230, 230n, 364, 367, 369n, 371, 379, 380, 384, 396–7, 398, 399, 424, 528; establishment of foreign bases in, 370, 372, 380; Great Britain and, 139, 140, 396; Israeli military operations in, 407, 422n, 424, 425n, 431n, 459n; Israeli position on, 367, 371, 396, 422, 459, 536, 526; Jewish settlements in, 161n, 367, 371, 375, 380, 506; US interests in, 380, 396
Nehru, Jawaharlal 633
Nemchinov, S., **166–8**
Nenni, Pietro, 475, 716
Netherlands, 44, 557, 676n; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *890*
Neumann, Emanuel, **5–7,** 8n
New Times (see Novoe vremia)
New York Herald Tribune, 554n
New York Times, 98, 825
Newman, Joseph, 553, 554n, 555, 569
Newsweek, 548
Nikolaevic, R., 93
Nikolai, Metropolitan, 307n
Nir, Nahum, 645
Nissan (Katznelson), Avraham, 36, 41, 898
Nixon, John, 216
Nordau, Max, 102
North African Jews (*see also* Sephardim), 26, 80, 414, 464
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (*see* NATO)
Norway, 44, 45
Novak, Jan, 282n, 338n
Novikov, E., 839
Novikov, Kirill Vasil'evich, 8, 82n, 83, 148–50, 151, 158, 162–3
Novikov, Nikolai Vasil'evich, **73–4,** 114n
Novoe vremia, 78, 78n, 131, 378, 419, 420n, 433, 594, 594n, 616, 622, 627, 681, 860, 863, 872, 876
nuclear weapons, 546, 548, 564, 590, 610, 736, 765
Nuri (*see* Said)

October Revolution, 93, 315, 359, 364, 395, 401n, 406, 408, 477, 503, 569, 570, 571–3, 600, 736n, 772, 842, 872
Odessa, Jews in, 659, 660n
Ode-Vasil'eva, Klavdiia Viktorovna, 448
Ogol'tsov, S.I., 510n, 666n

Ogonek, 672
oil (*see also* ARAMCO, Kirkuk–Haifa pipeline), 122, 140, 170, 171, 176, 177, 260, 263, 302, 353, 478, 512, 525–6, 551n, 715, 741n, 822
Oren, Mordechai, 92, 845n, 912, 920, 928
Orenstein, Shimon, 845n, 912, 920, 928
Orient, 163, 210
Orthodox Palestine Society (*see also* Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, Russian Palestine Society), 345
Osokin, 147

P. (*see* Harmer)
Paisov, N.F., **93–4**
Pakistan, 470n, 552
Palestine (*see also* UN General Assembly, *yishuv*) 73n, 95, 100, 101n, 103, 251n, 340, 348, 370, 380, 760n; Arab–Jewish conflict in (*see also* Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry, Anglo-American Committee of Experts), 110, 184, 250, 273, 276, 335n; Arab state in (*see also* UN General Assembly Partition Resolution), 372, 397, 398, 491, 492, 493, 497, 528, 576; demography (*see also* population transfer), 100, 103, 183; economic development, 76, 100, 183, 253n; Soviet citizens in, 21, 24n, 58n, 125–6, 361n, 619
Palestine Commission, 269, 280
Palestine Committee for Cultural Relations with the USSR, 78
Palestine Committtee of the War Cabinet, 104n
Palestine Communist Party, 33, 42, 110, 110n, 178n, 179, 199n, 200, 201, 215
Palestine Foundation Fund (*see* Keren Hayesod)
Palestine Jewish Rescue Committee, 90
Palestine Post, 34, 554n, 602, 607
Palestine Potash Works, 353
Palestinian Arabs (*see also* Arab government in Palestine, Arab Higher Committee, Arab revolt, refugees, League of National Liberation) 28, 34, 39, 40, 72, 77, 101, 184, 119, 217, 471; and Great Britain, 169, 206–7; on partition of Palestine, 145, 162; relations with Jews, 1, 72, 103, 161; and USSR, 87, 96, 520
Pal'gunov, Nikolai Grigor'evich, *402*
Palmah, 345, 363, 474n
Paniushkin, Aleksandr Semenovich, 444
Paraguay, 95
Paris Peace Conference (July 1946), 138, 156n, 183
Parker, Ralph, 366n, 860n
partition resolution (*see* UN General Assembly Partition Resolution)
Pastoev, V.V., 437, 451, 460
Pauker, Ana, 450, 550n
Peel Commission, 70, 80, 152, 190, 207, 379
Pegov, Nikolai Mikhailovich, 926
People's Democracies (*see* Soviet bloc)
Perlson (Peri), Eliezer, 301
Perlzweig, Maurice L., 5–7, 8n
Pervukhin, Mikhail Sergeevich, 888n, 933n
Petlura, Simon, 358n
Petrenko, Nikolai Andreevich, 32–5, 35–42, 58, 320
Pijade, Mosa, 566
Pines, Dan, 563
Plumer, Herbert, 169
Poale Zion, 137, 138, 201, 320, 666n, 837
Poale Zion Left, 130n, 138, 189, 200, 838
Podtserob, Boris Fedorovich, 96n, 189n, 236n, 378n, 505n, **516–17,** 759n, **795–9,** 830, **838–9**
Podvigin, Evgenii M., 224, **393,** 421n
Poland (*see also* immigration to Palestine), 1n, 3nn, 6n, 44, 50n, 95n, 165, 230n, 282n, 523n, 564n, 876n, 892n, 894, 896nn, 897n, 913; and Israel, 302, 887, 892; Jews and Jewish emigration from, 3n, 4, 6n, 8, 17n, 37, 45, 49n, 54, 64, 68, 142n, 143, 357n, 358, 366, 415, 550n, 747n
Poliakov, V., 728n
Polianskii, Ivan Vasil'evich, **376–8, 410–11**
Polish Committee of Liberation, 81

Polish government-in-exile, 60n, 259n
Polish Home Army, 89, 156
Political Affairs, 152
Popov, Mikhail P., **562–70, 812–15, 844–5**
Popova, Nina Vasil'evna, 402
population transfer, 1–2
Portugal, 44
Pospelov, Petr Nikolaevich, 352
postal agreements (*see also* Universal Postal Union, Universal Postal Convention), 75, 264–5, 304, 306, 524–5
Potapov, 21, 22
Potemkin, Vladimir Petrovich, 113n
Potofsky, Jacob, S., 507n
Pozhidaev, Dmitrii Petrovich, 770
Pravda, 63, 297, 352, 433, 677n, 712, 850, 878, 907n
Prihar (*see* Friedberg)
Prisoners of Zion, 13, 19, 24, 29, 33, 37, 42, 68, 405–6, 654, 928
property, Russian/Soviet in Palestine/Israel (*see also* Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, Orthodox Palestine Society, Russian Palestine Society), 24n, 91n, 92, 95n, 112–17, 282, 337–8, 345, 421, 434, 440–41, 472, 519, 519n, 534, 537, 538n, 556, 559, 574, 575, 605, 625, 641, 667, 668–70, 674, 683, 685, 702, 703, 714, 720–1, 729, 729n, 730, 734, 753, 786–90, 800–11 *passim*, 825, 839, 852–4, 929–30, 931
Protich, Dragoslav, 656
Prudkov, O., 615, 616
Psurtsev, Nikolai Dem'ianovich, 304, *306*
Pushkin, Georgii Maksimovich, 147n, *812–15*, 824n, 830–1, 832n, 840n, **848**, *897–9*

Quaroni, Pietro, 113–14
Qawuqji, Fawzi, 274, 407n
al-Quwwatli, Shukri, 121, 210, 216, 257
Qibya, 940, 943

Rabinovich, Shloyme, 292–301 *passim*
Rabinovich, Yitzhak, 342, 344–5, 421, 441, **641–3**
Radai, Uri, 805n
Raevskii, 705, 842
Rafael, Gideon, **263, 575–6, 655–8, 690–3,** 723, 725, **779–80, 824–9,** 899
Rajk, Laszlo, 564n, 566
Rakosi, Matyas 450
Rakovskii, Khristian Georgievich, 112–14
Ratner, Yohanan, **343–4, 376,** *400–1,* 402, 409, *457,* 458, 472n, 582
Razin, Ben-Zion, **891–2, 892, 896–7,** 899, **900–1,** 923n, 925–6, *930*
Red Cross and Red Crescent, 64n, 337, 362, 498, 812
Red Shield of David, 498–9, 586, 812
Reedman, John, 330n, 331nn
refugees, Jewish (*see also* displaced persons, emigration, immigration), 16, 42, 56, 83, 85, 154, 157, 363, 388, 389n, 456, 654, 747n
refugees, Palestinian Arab, 347, 351n, 364, 385, 418n, 469nn, 471, 493, 506n, 514, 521n, 522, 523nn, 596, 656, 811, 825, 825n, 868; Israeli position on, 348, 364, 470, 492, 505, 661; repatriation and resettlement of 348, 385, 470, 491, 491n, 470, 498, 505, 514, 523n, 661, 705n; Soviet position on, 490–2, 521, 523
Remez, David, 105–11 *passim*, 252n, 341, 453, 645
Reston, James, 98n
reunification of families, 727, 729, 740, 744, 747–8, 751–2, 774, 816, 920
Reznik, 328
Rhee, Syngman, 658
Rhodes Conference (*see also* UN Palestine Conciliation Commission), 426n, 430
Riftin, Yaacov, 363–5, 536, 571, 579n, 589, 609–10, 660–3, 689–90, 698–700, 808n, 810n, 821n, 845n
Riga, 46
Riley, William Edward 424, 425n, 709
Roberts, Frank Needham, 125n, 126n
Robertson, Brian Hubert, 688, 689–90
Robeson, Paul, 549, 562n
Robinson, Jacob, **150–7,** 182n, 599, 748

Robinson, Nehemia, 599
Ro'i, Yaacov, 598n
Rokah, David, 341n,
Rokah, Yisrael 372, 606, 873n
Rokossovskii, Konstantin Konstantinovich, 564
Rolland, Romain, 79
Romania (*see also* Soviet bloc), 44, 97n, 98n, 237n, 301n, 305n, 357n, 415n, 892n; emigration from, 97n, 415, 418, 450, 457, 460, 487, 488n, 673n; and Israel (*see also* immigration to Palestine), 305, 583, 711, 887; Jews in, 99, 203, 357, 415, 550n, 545n, 747n, 928n; Zionist activity in, 712
Romer, Tadeusz, 49–50, 60n
Romulo, Carlos, 609
Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, 34n, 68, 91, 101, 121n, 161, 170, 187n
Rosen, Pinhas (*see* Rosenblueth)
Rosen, Shlomo, 895
Rosenberg, Fred, 153
Rosenbleuth, Felix, 381, 453, 858
Rosenmann, Samuel I., 367n
Rosenne (Rowson), Shabbtai, 326
Rosenwald, Lessing, 220
Ross, John K., 367n
Rozhkov, Vladimir I., 322, 341n, 643, 668–70, 703, 705–7, 842
Rubin, Reuven, 488n, 583
Ruffer (*see* Rafael)
Ruppin, Arthur, 71
Rusk, Dean, 237–8
Russia, pre-1917 (*see also* antisemitism, property, Russian Imperial Orthodox Society), 95, 358–9
Russian Ecclesiastical Mission (*see also* property), 91, 93, 95n, 112n, 113, 115, 282n, 345, 382, 434, 440n, 518, 538n, 641, 641n, 667n, 668, 683n, 685, 720n, 729, 788, 804, 886
Russian Orthodox Church (*see also* property, Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church), 93n, 307n, 337n, 538n
Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, 282n, 420n, 853
Russian Palestine Society (*see also* Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, Orthodox Palestine Society), 91, 112n, 421, 434, 440, 518–20, 534, 537, 538n, 667n, 668n, 720–1, 729, 734, 787, 788, 804, 852n, 853, 886, 929–30, 931

Saburov, M.Z., 888n, 933n
Sadeh, Yitzhak, 645
al-Said, Nuri, 86n, 104n
Saksin, Georgii Filippovich, 53n
Salame, Hasan, 259
Saltykov-Shchedrin, M.E., 358n
Samuel, Herbert, 68, 123, 169, 183
Samylovskii, Ivan Vasil'evich, **74–5,** 77n, **84–5,** 88n, **90–2,** 96n, **112–17,** *120–3, 125, 139–42, 158–64,* 168n, **172, 173**
Sandström, Alfred, 212, 213n
Sasson, Eliahu, **135–7,** 251n, **266–8,** 399n, 425
Sattath (*see* Tesler)
al-Saud, Abdul Aziz, 63, 120, 121, 158
Saudi Arabia, 85n, 88, 91, 95, 104, 119n, 121n, 123, 185, 232, 258, 495
Sawt al-Umma, 521
Schuman, Robert, 391, 397, 399
Schwartz, Harry, 419
Schwarzbart, Isaac, 89
Security Council (*see* UN)
Semichastnov, 750
Semin, 125
Semioshkin, Aleksandr Semenovich, 238–40, **271–7,** 345, 365, **518–20**
Senkevich (*see* Antonii)
Sephardim (*see also* North African Jews), 454, 696
Seraev, Il'ia, 343–4, 458, 581
Serezhin, K., 131n
Sergeev, Nikolai, P., 341n, 345, 440n
Sergeev, V.A., *443*
Sergei Aleksandrovich (Romanov), Grand Duke, 91n, 113, 667–8, 683n, 720n, 788, 800n, 804, 852n, 853n
Sergeichuk, K., **264–5**
Serlin, Yosef, 858
Serot, André, 360n
Shapira, Moshe, 452, 855, 856, 858
Shapira, Yaacov, 440, 440n, 683n

Shapiro, Henry, 467, 896
Sharett (Shertok), Moshe, *8, 16–24, 29–30, 32–5,* **51–2,** 55–6, **56–7,** 72–3, **90,** *118–20,* 133, 229, 230, 231, 249, 250, 253–5, 259, *263,* **264,** 271, **281,** *283,* **285,** *285,* 296, **301, 305,** *305,* **306, 307, 310, 310**, *311,* 315–16, *317–18,* 321, 326, *330–2, 332, 336, 339, 339,* 340, 346–9, 360, *365–6,* 367–70, 371, 372, *373–4,* 380, **389–92, 396–400,** 405, *407–9,* **412–19,** 426n, *429–30,* 430, *438–9,* **444,** *445,* 446, 449, 449n, **450–1,** 452, 460, 464, *467,* 467, 469n, *472,* 505n, *506–7,* 513, *514–15,* **528–32, 541–2,** *544–5,* **545, 546–7,** *547–8, 548–50,* 553–4, 555–6, **556–7,** 560, *575–6, 578–9,* 580, 580n, *581–5, 587–8,* 589, 593, 593n, 595–6, **597–8, 598–600,** 601–12 *passim,* 615, 616–19, 620, *636–41,* 644, *645–6, 655–8, 659–60,* 662, 683–4, 689, 695n, 703–4, 708, 710, 711–13, 714, 720, 721, *722–7,* 730–1, 737, 760–2, 765–6, **771–8,** *780–4,* 786–7, 790n, *790–2,* 800, 803–4, 821–4, *824–9,* 832n, 839, 840n, 862–4, 868n, 869, **873–4,** 883, *893–5,* 897, **921–2,** *923,* 928, 934–5, **935–6,** 939n
Sharett, Yehuda, 710n
Shazar, Zalman, 453, 645, 666–7n, 695n
Shcherbakov, Aleksandr Sergeevich, *52–3,* 850
Shcherbakov, L.A., *936–7*
Shchiborin, Aleksei Dmitrievich, 88nn, **90–2,** 114n, 119, 125, 192, **363,** 382n, 387n, 388, 500n, 539n, **574–5, 577,** 594, **620–2,** 625–7, 646, 695, 696n, 705, 744n, **762–5, 862–4**
Sheib (Eldad), Yisrael, 845n
Sheinin, Lev, 294
Sherf, Zeev, 326
Shertok (*see* Sharett)
Shiloah, Reuven 326
Shimeliovich, Boris A., 293–301 *passim,* 850, 859
Shitreet, Bechor Shalom, 453
Shkolnik (Eshkol), Levi, 603
Shlifer, Solomon Moiseevich, 301, 339, 377, 411
Shishakli, Adib, 867n
Shohat, Manya, 226, 324
Shorr, Moshe, 6
Shragai, Shlomo Zalman, 36, 41
Shtein, Boris Efimovich, **169–72,** 172n, 176n, 231
Shtern, Lina, 942
al-Shuqayri, Ahmad, 141
Shvedov, Aleksei Aleksandrovich, 88n, 132
Shvernik, Nikolai Mikhailovich, **309**, 315, *327,* 339, *510–14*
Shvivi, V., 570
Sidqi, Ismail, 149
Sikorski, Wladyslaw, 8n
Silin, Mikhail Aleksandrovich, *313–14*
Silver Abba Hillel, *196–7,* 201, 223, **249,** 869
Simic, Vladimir, 204n, 213, 228n, 229
Simon, Michael, 326, 601n
Simonov, Konstantin Mikhailovich, 300, 455
Sinai, 422n
Sinclair, Archibald, 185
Skrzeszewski, Stanislaw, 887
Sladkovskii, M., **404**
Slansky, Rudolf, 845n
Slansky trial, 845–9 *passim,* 857, 859, 863, 868–70, 869, 884, 893n, 912n, 928n
Slavin, Nikolai Vasil'evich, 402
Slepak, S.E., 292
Slim, William, 638
Smart, Walter Alexander, 259
Smirnov, 682
Smirnov, Andrei Andreevich, *142–4,* **146–7**
Smith, Bedell, Walter, 423
Smuts, Jan, 183
Sneh, Moshe, 320, 324, 379–81, 536, 571, 572, 615, 688, 715–18, 741–3, 818, 821, 845n, 913n
Sobolev, Arkadii Aleksandrovich, 253–5, 349, 399, 779, 780
Sofronov, Anatolii Vladimirovich, 455
Solod, Daniil Semenovich, 76n, 82–4,

120–3, 132, **139–42**, **158–64,** *173,* 224, 257–8, 262, 282, 307n, 728n
Sommerstein, Emil, 6, 81, 90
South Africa, 74, 230n, 316, 784
Soveksportfilm, 538n
Soviet bloc (*see also* emigration of Jews, immigration to Palestine, and under individual countries), 204, 477, 489; and Israel, 302, 314, 317, 389, 449, 479, 488–9, 496, 584, 585, 617, 650, 734, 884, 886, 887, 888, 905, 906–13 *passim*, 920, 928; Jews in, 302, 538n; at UN, 269, 496, 575n, 589n, 766n, 894
Soviet Jewry (*see also* anti-cosmopolitan campaign, antisemitism, Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee), 2, 4, 6, 9n, 44n, 151, 154, 359, 374, 455, 456, 544, 547n, 567, 568, 600, 646–54, 648, 662, 687, 688, 777, 779, 792, 794, 893n, 941, 943; cultural life, 151, 154, 322, 547n; and Israel, 360, 783, 784, 791, 883; reaction to Arab–Israeli War, 286–96 *passim*; reaction to establishment of state of Israel, 284, 295, 297; and Zionism, 293, 378, 405, 409, 411, 567, 590, 660, 662n, 808
Soviet Union (*see* USSR)
Sovinformburo, **43–8,** 94n, 538n
Spaak, Paul-Henri, 399
Spain, 95, 560, 661, 784n
Sprinzak, Yosef, 341
Stalin, Iosif Vissarionovich, 24, 79, *96–7,* 105n, 121n, 226n, 228nn, *235–6, 269–70,* 285n, 311n, *352–60,* **382,** *383, 384–6, 395,* **406,** 423, *458–60,* 505n, *517,* 540n, 557, 567, 569, 667n, 671n, 684n, 691, 691n, 728n, 751, 759n, 777, *785–6, 792–3,* 802, 802n, 833, 842n, *843,* 858, 871n, 874n, *887–8,* 889, 890, 915n
Starov, Colonel, 142
Stern Group, 91n, 118n, 215, 272, 364
Stevenson, Adlai, 828
Stoeckler, Lajos, 928n
Strabolgi, Lord (Joseph Montague Kenworthy), 104
Stratton, William Grant, 218n
Stratton bill, 218
Sudoplatov, Pavel Anatol'evich, 44n
Sudan, 141n, 164n, 370
Suez Canal, 141n, 380, 396, 458, 681, 820, 921n; blockade of, 723, 727, 729, 737–8, 826
al-Sulh, Riyad, 216n, 257–8
Sultanov, Abdurakhman Fasliakhovich, **72–3,** 83, **85–8, 238–40**
Supreme Arab Committee, 122, 142, 273
Surits, Iakov Zakharovich, 105n, 117
Surkov, Aleksei Aleksandrovich, 455
Suslov, Mikhail Andreevich, 300, 438n, *614, 819*
Svet, Gershon, 34, 223
Sweden, 47, 95, 557, 676n, 809
Switzerland, 95, 809
Sykes–Picot agreement, 205
synagogues (*see also* Choral Synagogue), 7, 660, 700, 942
Syria (*see also* Greater Syria), 39, 85n, 119n, 121n, 185, 255n, 257, 258, 317n, 484n, 732n, 755n, 866, 939n; cease-fire negotiations with Israel, 469n, 506n; and Israel, 469, 698, 699, 707–9, 718; and Lebanon, 424; at UN, 232, 265, 664, 665; and USSR, 82n, 718
Syrkin, Marie, 599

Tabenkin, Yitzhak, 320
Taft, Robert, 73n, 297
Taft–Wagner resolution, 297n
Tarasov, Mikhail Petrovich, 92
Tarle, Evgenii Viktorovich, 301
Tarnopoler, Luwish, **130–2,** 324, *328–30,* 329, 386
Tartakower, Arye, 6
TASS (Soviet Telegraphic Agency), 18, 132, 402, 586, 594
Tatars, 640; Crimean, 455, 649, 654, 662n
Tat'ianchenko, A.I., 930n, 934n
Tel Aviv, 250, 264n, 274, 285, 288, 351n, 419n
Teplov, Leonid Fedorovich, **146–7**
Tesler (Sattath) Dov, **705–7**
Tikhon, Patriarch, 93n
The Times (London), 139, 199

Timofeev, Anatolii Leont'evich, **232–5**
Timotheos, Patriarch, 307
Tishin, I., 508, 594n
Tito, Josip, 365n, 565, 566, 917
Togliatti, Palmiro, 475n
Toledano, Vincente Lombardo, *128–30*
Tolstoy, Lev, 358
Topchiev, Aleksandr Vasil'evich, 886, 929–30, *931*
Touma, Emil, 216
trade unions (*see* Histadrut, World Federation of Trade Unions)
Transjordan (*see also* West Bank), 39, 80, 85n, 100, 103, 104n, 121n, 123, 127, 135, 136, 139, 145, 149, 151, 166, 170, 184, 208, 214, 222, 239–40, 257, 258, 259, 260, 274, 278, 291, 292, 303, 334, 347, 348, 366n, 370, 372, 379, 380, 381, 384, 396–7, 398, 407, 425, 431, 458, 469, 488, 492–3, 495, 497, 513, 522, 526, 527, 528, 537, 574n, 559, 560, 620–1, 637–9, 690, 694, 753, 829; admission to UN, 366, 492; and Great Britain, 127n, 425n, 431n; and Israel, 334n, 471, 517, 537, 560, 593, 595n, 596, 620n, 621; and Jerusalem, 575, 811, 924
Tripartite Declaration (25 May 1950), 553n, 636, 638, 690, 699n
Troianovskii, Oleg Aleksandrovich, 428
Trotsky, Lev, 625
Troutbeck, John M., 396n
Trud, 432
Truman, Harry S., 121, 121nn, 140, 140n, 158, 159–61, 170, 173, 176, 185, 186, 207, 322, 369, 464n, 546n, 564n, 702n, 868n
Tsarapkin, Semen Konstantinovich, 189n, 196, *222*, 227n, 229, **249–251, 251–3, 258–62,** 262–3, 391, 397, 522n, 556, 560, 575, 579n, 599, 610, 723n, 737, 738n, 826, 927, 927n
Tsirulnikov, Shlomo, 130n, 320–2
Turkey, 95, 114, 423, 495, 633n, 639, 656, 663
Tuwim, Julian, 355, 356n

Überall (*see* Avriel)
Ukrainian SSR, 2n, 6n, 544n; emigration from, 293n; Jews in, 47, 590; at UN, 148, 523n
Umanskii, Konstantin Aleksandrovich, 1n, *5–7*, 8n, 13, 16, 18, 19, 44n, 79–81
UN, 130, 149, 187, 693, 699
UN Charter, 148, 151, 181, 193, 210, 490n, 491n, 532, 607, 664
UN Constituent Assembly (San Francisco, 25 April–25 June, 1945), 95, 97
UN General Assembly, 1st Special Session (1947), 180, 197n, 233, 233n; 2nd Special Session (1948), 269n; 4th Session (1949), 521n, 523n, 579n; 5th Session (1950), 660n, 663–5; 6th Session, 765n; 7th Session, 824, 838n, 864n, 893n; Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine (1947), 226n, 227n, 228nn, 229, 229n, 230, 234, 235, 242n, 244, 248, 273, 369n; Interim Committee, 589n; Palestine Commission (1947), 250, 252, 264n, 269, 273, 277–80; Palestine Conciliation Commission (1948), 385, 398, 418, 418n, 469nn, 470n, 493, 522, 523, 523n, 532n, 551, 551nn 593, 824; Partition Resolution (181II) (*see also* UN Ad Hoc Committee, UNSCOP), 230nn, 242n, 248, 250n, 251, 255n, 257n, 260, 262n, 269n, 271–7, 277n, 278n, 340n, 348, 350, 368, 372n, 379, 384, 390, 391, 397, 398, 399, 506n, 513, 521, 522n 523, 526, 527, 545n, 558, 577, 611; resolution 194 (11.12.48), 418n, 469n, 551n; resolution 303IV on Jerusalem (9.12.49), 623, 628n; Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP), 181, 194, 197, 201n, 202n, 204n, 210, 212–14, 216, 219, 220, 220n, 226n, 227n, 228n, 229, 230, 230nn, 233–4, 241, 243, 308n, 369, 483n
UN International Force for Palestine, 253, 260n
UN Observers in Palestine, 383
UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), 125n
UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), 825

UN Security Council, 251, 260n, 265, 277, 279n, 317, 330n, 331, 349, 350, 383n, 656n, 657, 663, 665, 705, 707, 713, 724, 737, 940, 943; admission of Israel to UN, 349, 399, 400, 433, 449, 467, 528; resolution on Negev (19.10.48), 392n, 408n, 431n; UN Trusteeship Council, 98, 148nn, 167, 171, 187, 209, 210, 230, 231, 233, 242n, 265, 269, 272, 274, 385, 391, 397, 483, 556, 559, 575, 623, 628–9, 632, 641
United Press International (UPI), 467
United States, 44, 91, 95, 230nn, 261, 318n, 526, 628, 692; arms embargo on Palestine, 254n, 260, 272, 297n; Congress, 74, 170, 183, 220, 260, 657; Democratic Party, 104, 121, 220, 828; Four Point program of, 732n, 736n; and Israel (*see* US–Israeli relations); Jews in (*see* American Jewry); Middle East policy, 122, 127, 159, 160, 173, 263, 522, 553n, 631, 715; Palestine policy, 104, 121n, 122, 140, 140n, 170, 176, 207, 209, 238, 262, 267, 277–9, 512, 521, 526, 527; press, 74, 220, 221; public opinion, 318, 692; recognition of Israel, 332, 349, 367, 512; Republican Party, 104, 121, 220; State Department, 56, 61, 89, 260, 261, 263, 332, 369, 408, 423, 529, 657, 664, 736, 865; at UN, 261, 262, 265, 277–80, 348, 369n, 396, 628, 632, 657, 676n, 738n, 773, 841; and USSR, 263, 538n, 639, 640
US–Israeli relations, 314, 332, 346, 347, 369, 512, 608, 617, 694, 699, 700, 713, 715, 805, 821, 822, 827, 909; cultural ties, 504, 814; economic aid, 459, 463, 537, 677n, 702, 715, 736, 762, 775, 776, 823, 939n; legation in Israel, 373, 435; military aid (*see* arms supplies)
Universal League of Peace, 215
Universal Postal Convention, 393, 515
Universal Postal Union, 393nn, 543, 586, 624
Uruguay, 229n, 230n, 676n
Ussishkin, Menahem 102
USSR, 5n, 44, 538n, 477, **753–5,** *757–8,* **882–3, 901;** Academy of Sciences, 667n, 805; and Arab states, 91, 245, 894; foreign policy, 478, 479, 484, 531; and Israel (*see* Israeli–Soviet relations); Jewish emigration from (*see* emigration); Jews in (*see* Soviet Jewry); Middle East policy, 118, 119, 135, 302, 731, 732, 755, 940; Ministry of Communications, 264; Ministry of Defence, 578; Ministry of Foreign Trade, 696; minorities in, 649nn, 662n, 820n; Narkomindel (People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs), *9–10,* 43, 58, 60, 112; Narkomvneshtorg, People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade), 31; Palestine policy, 79, 81, 87, 92, 99, 104, 107, 123, 128, 148–9, 156, 163, 168, 172, 175, 179, 195, 203, 211, 238, 240, 243 245, 513, 520, 527, 528, 538n, 576, 577, 824; and partition of Palestine, 146, 195–6, 230nn, 245, 269, 270; press, 132, 136, 366, 433, 476, 490, 585, 586, 594, 616, 647, 672, 681, 695, 734, 739, 758, 776, 792, 806, 809, 827, 876, 877, 943; public opinion, 618; Supreme Soviet (Presidium), **926;** and US, 196, 238, 423, 538n, 639, 773, 907n; at UN, 211, 226–36 *passim,* 241, 242, 269, 270, 326, 350, 384, 391, 418, 523n, 538n, 577, 623, 631, 637, 659, 664n, 665, 691n, 705n, 711, 724, 737, 806, 829; and *yishuv,* 3, 14, 33, 42, 82, 91, 95, 132, 134, 147, 217; and Zionism, 7, 8, 24, 28, 62, 84, 131, 293
USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *85–8, 238–40,* 125, **176–80,** 338, **438,** 443, 538, *571–3,* **587,** *589–90, 615, 624–5, 635,* 636, *644, 645, 655, 660–3, 688–9, 689–90, 698–700, 701–2, 735–8, 760–2,* 785, 793, *794, 800–1,* **805,** *807–10, 811,* 812, *817, 817–19, 820–1, 821–4, 832–3, 839–40, 842, 845–6,* 863, *874–5, 879–81, 881, 885,* 888, 930, *938;* embassy in Bulgaria, *895;* embassy in Turkey, **77–9;** legation in Israel, 305, 309, 315–16, 327, 332, 341, 342, 360–1, 372–3, 429, 442, 538, **580–1,**

592, **600–14, 624–5,** 655n, 695n, 694, 710, 733–4, 805–6, 831n, 846, 868–70, 874, *875,* 875n, 879–904 *passim,* 922–7 *passim,* 942

V League (*see also* League for Friendly Relations with the USSR), 14n, 32n, *43,* 58, 64n, 77, 105–12, 133, 134, 137, 221, 224, 226n, 408, 473, 476
Vaad Leumi (Jewish National Council), 11n, 33, 41, 206, 252n, 271, 272
Valuiskii, 54
Varga, Eugen, 567
Vasilenko, V.S., **382–3**
Vasilevskii, Aleksandr, 376
Vatican, 485, 538n, 559, 629, 638–9, 641, 656, 677
Vatolina, Lidiia, 535n
Vavilov, Mikhail Sergeevich, 187n, 188, 217–18, 219–21, 222
Velebit, Vladimir, 203–5
Venezuela, 230n
Vetrov, V.M., 898–9
Vidmar, Victor, 307n
Vilnius, 47
Vinogradov, Sergei Aleksandrovich, 13, 17, 18, 24, 24n, 57, 172n, 226n, 228n
Vladimir, Bishop, 641–2, 669
Vlasov, Andrei Petrovich, 461, **387–9, 679**
Vlasov, I.A., 339
VOKS (All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries), **43,** 92, 96, 107, 111, 328, 329, 387n, 403n, 444n, 500, 504, 508, 538n, 571, 694, 734, 753, 767–8, 819n, 870–2
Volgin, Viacheslav Petrovich, 300
Voroshilov, Kliment Efremovich, 888n, 926, 933n, 936–8, 943
Vovsi, Miron Semenovich, 850, 859, 860
Voznesenskii, Nikolai Alekseevich, 228n, 270n, 567, 933n
Vyshinskii, Andrei Ianuar'evich, 6n, *13–14, 15–16,* **49–50,** 53n, *93–4,* 96n, 113n, 126n, 128n, *137–8, 166–8, 169–72, 205–11, 226,* **227–8** *228,* 234, 235n, 236, **241–2,** 251n, 256n, 262n, *264–5, 304,* **306,** *307–9,* 326n, 383, 384, 385, 390, 391, 397, 410n, 412–19, **428,** 429, 449, 451, **451,** *452–4,* **458–60,** 461–5, 467, 467n, **504–5,** 507, **517,** 533n, 545n, 547, **579–80,** 580n, 596n, 598, 614n, 617, **623,** *634,* **635,** *636,* 662n, 667n, 673, 673n, 684n, **744,** 744, *746–8,* 749n, 750n, 751–2, 752n, 759n, **765–6,** 771–8, 790, *795–9,* 808nn, **810, 812, 817,** 832n, *862–4,* 870n, **882,** 893, 899

Wafd, 87n, 136, 595n
Wagner, Robert, 73n, 91n
al-Wahada, 223
Wahl, David, **187–8,** 189, **196–7**
Wahrhaftig, Zerah, 252n
Wallace, Henry, 318n, 379, 549
Walter (*see* Avidan)
waqf, 101
War Refugee Board, 88
Warsaw ghetto, 45
Wavell, Archibald, 760n
Weiss, Yaacov, 213n
Weizmann, Chaim, 1–5, 9–10, **10–11,** 17n, 19, **25–8,** 29, *29,* 56n, 61, **66–7,** 68, 183, 285, *309,* 315, 316n, 321, 367, 369, 369n, 370, 375, 425, 457n, 509, 608, 842n, 843
Weizmann Institute of Science, 375
West, Benjamin, 30, 405n
West Bank, 409n, 469n, 471n, 522n
White Paper of 1922, 184; of 1930, 184; of 1939, 3n, 36, 38, 74, 85n, 86–7, 102n, 103n, 120, 185, 207
Wilner Meir, 215n, 328, 572, 608, 609, 880
Wilson, Charles Edward, 724
Wilson, Henry Maitland, 89
Wilson, Woodrow, 170, 182, 183, 220
Wise, Stephen, 1n, 19, 81, 214
Woodhead Commission, 70, 184
World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), 92–3, 111, 518n, 590, 612, 622
World Jewish Congress, 30n, 44, 44n, 55, 81, 81n, 214
World War II (*see also* displaced persons, Germany, Holocaust, Jewish Council for Russian War Relief,

refugees, War Refugee Board), 1, 4, 5n, 9, 11, 12–13, 19–24 *passim*, 34, 37, 45, 48, 51–94 *passim*, 101, 106–7, 108n, 115n, 152, 186–6, 193–4
World Zionist Conference, 108, 108n
World Zionist Congress (*see also* American Zionist Federation), 161n, 164, 166, 716n, 739n; and Palestine question, 209

Yaari, Meir, 320, 615, 717, 718, 737
Yadin, Yigael, 689, 698, 818
Yair, Yitzhak, 312
Yalta conference, 144n
al-Yawm, 520
Yediot aharonot, 555, 568–9, 570, 695, 713
Yediot maariv, 563, 565
Yemen, 85n, 88, 91, 121n, 489n; Jews in, 80
Yiddish (in USSR), 7, 8n, 33n, 43, 154, 359, 402, 474, 535, 652, 660, 905; press (*see also Eynikeyt*), 152, 220, 296; radio broadcasts, 33n, 809n; writers, 151, 498
yishuv, 11–12, 27–8, 63, 80, 87, 93, 108, 133, 183, 201, 208, 216, 266, 267–8; aid to USSR, 14, 19, 31, 64, 92, 133; and Arabs, 39, 108, 267; contribution to war effort, 10–11, 37, 51, 185; press, 133; Soviet citizens in, 21, 125, 619; and USSR, 20–1, 23, 25, 31–2, 56–7, 93, 96, 108, 132, 315
Young Men's Muslim Association, 101n
Yugoslavia (*see also* immigration to Palestine, Soviet bloc), 44, 95n, 165, 204n, 205, 264n, 282n, 415, 483n, 550n, 565, 743n; and Israel, 302, 612; at UN, 665; and UNSCOP, 222, 228, 229
Yugoslavov, 41
Yuval, Moshe, **229–32**

Za'im, Husni, 484n
Zaitsev, Grigorii Titovich, **521–3, 525–8, 924–5,** 925n, **929–30**
Zarubin, Georgii Nikolaevich 453
Zarudnyi, A.S., 84n
Zaslavskii, David, 300, 653
Zawadowski, Zygmunt, 50
Zerubavel, Yaacov, 324, 645
Zharov, M., 22
Zhdanov, Andrei Aleksandrovich, 151, 228n, 270n, 330, 567
Zhegalova, S.A., 17, 22, **57–8**
Zhukov, Dmitrii Aleksandrovich, **936–7**
Ziesling, Aharon, 105–11 *passim*, 475, 938
Zinchenko, Konstantin, 579n
Zionism (*see also* American Jewry, Great Britain, Prisoners of Zion, Romania, Soviet Jewry, World Zionist Congress), 12, 25, 27, 65, 102, 178–9, 364, 374, 450n, 474, 535–6, 538, 547–50, 591, 602, 736, 806, 870, 894, 904, 938; and communism, 239, 484, 904; Soviet position on, 9, 28, 30, 33, 34, 42, 61–2, 66; suppression of and anti-Zionism, 7–8, 34, 61–2, 66, 84, 91, 124, 198, 412, 450–1, 455, 474, 548, 569, 609, 649, 691, 846, 857, 859, 870, 876–7, 894
Zionist Congress, 161, 178, 716
Zionist Organization of America, 55, 91n, 151, 201n, 890
Zionist Revisionist Party, 215
Zionist Workers' Party, 328
Zionist–Socialist Party, 837
Zissu, Abraham Leib, 417
Znamia, 599n
Zorin,Valerian Aleksandrovich, 147n, **256,** *282, 291, 323–4,* 326n, **337–8,** 351n, *363,* 365, 365nn, 382n, *386–7,* 394n, 406n, *409–10, 410–11,* **420–1, 436–7,** 438, 439, **443,** 460n, 505n, 506n, 510n, 513, 533n, 575n, **614,** 675, **695,** 750, **758–9,** 759, 786n, 789n, 790n, 793n, **799–800,** 808n, 840–1, *924–5, 929–30,* **931,** 939, 939n, 940n
Zotov, K., 702–4, 744n
Zviagin, Iurii, 594, 616